

A  
CRITICAL and CHRONOLOGICAL  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
Rise, Progress, Declension, *and* Revival  
OF  
KNOWLEDGE,  
CHIEFLY RELIGIOUS.

In TWO PERIODS.

- I. The PERIOD of *Tradition* from ADAM to MOSES.
- II. The PERIOD of *Letters* from MOSES to CHRIST.

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In TWO VOLUMES, QUARTO.

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VOL. I.

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By HENRY WINDER, D.D.

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CRITICAL AND CHRONOLOGICAL  
HISTORIES  
OF THE  
Rise, Progress, Declension, and Revival  
OF  
KNOWLEDGE  
CHIEFLY RELIGIOUS

In Two Periods.

- I. The Period of Tradition from Adam to Moses.
- II. The Period of Law from Moses to Christ.

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VOL. I.

By HENRY SWINDELL, D.D.

LONDON:





# P R E F A C E.

I AM sensible it may be expected that I should here lay before the Reader some general Account of my Design in this Work. But as I have in Part set forth my principal Aim in this Undertaking, in the Introduction, there may not be much Necessity to add a great deal more of that Kind, in this Prefatory Discourse. I am not inclined to take up much Time, in attempting an *Apology* for the many Deficiencies and Imperfections which may be found in this Performance. It is generally the greatest Difficulty, where there is the greatest Need of it.

BUT as I am convinced, even the best Authors cannot write to every Reader's Taste, or accommodate either their Subject, or their Way of managing of it, to such Diversity of Palates, I can much less expect such extraordinary Success. But any Writer who is conscious of a good Design, and is also apprehensive that some valuable End may be in Part answered, by the further Discussion of the Subject he sets himself to consider, or by the Manner which has occurred to him in which to consider it; any such Writer may encourage himself with Hope of the Candour of all Lovers of Truth and Enquiry; and that they will be good-natur'd enough to excuse some Peculiarities, which may not not be fully made out and cleared; and several Deficiencies, which he has not happened to be aware of. No Improvements of any Kind would be attempted, if Persons durst not set about what might have an Appearance of tending thereto, till they thought they could offer a pretty perfect Piece; and I am sure I am far from esteeming mine to be such. But in Works of great Compass and Extent, there may be very different *Views*, which may each of them be useful for Illustration of the Subject; and in this Variety, *one* principal View may content *one* Enquirer, while many others are left to the Range of different Genius's, to be distinctly considered; and to be pursued in a different Course of Studies, according to the various Inclinations of Authors.



MANY great and learned Men, of different Rank and Condition in the World, have employed their Time very usefully in different Ways, in Defence and Support of Religion, both Natural and Revealed. Some, by their Pattern and Influence and Authority in higher Life, have recommended them to the Veneration of those of inferior Condition; and others by Writing in Vindication thereof. And it is no Wonder that a Subject so copious and curious hath engaged many eminent Hands; when each several Branch of this great Subject is, of itself, so useful and entertaining.

OUR holy Religion has an Excellency in every Part of it, which is *really* a Part; though some Things may be sometimes obtruded upon the World as a Part of it, which are not so. But every Thing which is *really* a Part of our holy Religion, hath its own proper Glories, whether considered separately, or in the obvious Relation which it bears to the other Parts. If we consider it as containing a *Law*, or preceptive Rule of Action, it is the finest Sense and Reason, and recommendeth the purest Virtue. If we consider it as containing *Motives* to Action, they are the most pure, noble, and sublime; such as, tho' they are not adapted to operate on a mean, corrupt, depraved Heart, but chiefly in a rational and great Taste; yet the Instructions may engage the Judgment, to bring them to feel the Power of the Motives. Now when there are so many sublime Branches of Religion to engage the greatest Writers, none need be ashamed to take their Share in this Service, tho' one is only capable of undertaking a meaner Province in the Ministration of the Sanctuary. If one can but obviate *any* Difficulties, which by greater Writers have been, in their Attention to other Points, in some Degree overlooked, as not seeing them necessary to be considered, at least in their Plan; if I say one can but obviate *some* Difficulties, which have not been so much attended to, it may be of Benefit to the World. And then again, as several ingenious, but wrong-headed Persons have spent much Time in urging all that their Prejudices could suggest against Religion; so all that has been advanced *may be* considered, and some meaner Objections may fall to the Share of meaner Writers, tho' they are all considered, by those who state them, as considerable Objections.

WHAT I have had chiefly in my *View* has been to illustrate the superior Excellency of the Sacred Scriptures, under the Notion of the most unexceptionable History of the remotest Ages; and the best Accounts of the most early Times. I mean especially, the Books of *Moses*; as far as they plainly intended to penetrate into those Antiquities: And not only so, but I propose to consider *all* Scripture-History, whether of *elder* or more *recent* Ages, as the most authentic and genuine History of the *several* Times and Places, of which they *professedly* speak. And I have long thought, that if we can make out the History of the Scriptures as of undoubted Veracity, we lay the Foundations of our Religion too deep for any Attempts of Infidelity to shake, or with any Plausibility to attack.

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## P R E F A C E.

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I HAVE largely shewn in this Work, that God has generally instructed Mankind by Facts, for the Truth of which Facts, he has appealed to those who saw them and knew them; and then left them to reason from them, (as far as we have any Informations of the Matter) and to infer the best they could from those Facts. At other Times, and in other Cases, he has made use of eminent Facts, which were appealed to as Proofs that the Persons, who wrought those extraordinary Miracles, were Messengers coming from God himself. And hereby he authorized and authenticated those Messages, which they say they expressly bring from God himself. Now this latter is a more explicit Revelation of the Divine Will, than the former. For in the first Case, we seem to be left to our own Reason to argue as well as we can from these Facts, and to infer Doctrines to the best of our Power from them. But in the latter Case, our Attention and Reverence is raised by our seeing the Miracle, to pay the highest Veneration to the Precept, not of our own *inferring*, but of this authorized Messenger's *Teaching*. But still all this is properly nothing but History. Whether the Facts were seen by those who were by their own Reason to argue and infer from them, or any Prophet was authorized to teach us more directly, the Truths which God himself would impart to us by his Hand.

I HAVE interspersed up and down this Work, several Observations on the Excellency of Scripture-History, and the wholly unparallel'd Perfection of its Chronology. But yet I hope it may not be improper, as a Supplement to these disunited, scattered Notes, to add a more particular Account of them all together; since they appear to me so material in this Argument in Behalf of our Sacred Code.

I. THE *Mosaic* History is entirely above all Competition, parallel or rival, as to the Antiquity of its Dates, and the Extent of Time it takes up, in reckoning backwards from the Writer's own Age, to the Beginning and Origin of Things. Other ancient Writers wander in many unknown Ages of Uncertainty and Fable, before they arrive at those in which they think they have any Thing of History certainly to depend on.

BUT *Moses* loseth not a Moment of this mundane or human Time. He sets out before the Sun began his Course, before the Earth began its Revolution on its own Axis, and probably before the Excentricity of its Orbit was fixed, as it now prevails. This History begins before Human Nature commenced its Increase, or the Name of Parent and Son was known. It cannot therefore be expected that this History should begin, as most others do, with an Account of the Rise of Empires, Arts, Sciences or Arms, for their Birth is later than the Commencement of this Divine Narration. It cannot *begin* with the Rise of Kingdoms and Empires, for it starts long before their Birth. When there were no Men to govern or be governed. There could therefore be no such Things as Monarchs and their Councils, to honour and bless the World by their gentle Dominion; or to disgrace and curse it by their  
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their Tyranny. *Alexander* and *Cæsar* were not then so much as in Embryo, nor their Brethren in the East, *Belus*, *Ninus*, and *Semiramis*, and their Millions, of whom some Ancients fabulously talk so much. The very Countries over which they tyrannized, and the Ground on which the Royal Cities of *Babylon* and *Nineveh* afterwards stood, were not then made.

THERE is no Wonder that in this first History there are no large Accounts of Navigation, or Observations upon Astronomy at the Beginning of it; for it begins before the Ocean was spread Abroad, or bounded by its Shores, and before the Stars were ranged, and knew their Rank and Place among the Heavenly Hosts.

THE learned *Pagans* commonly distinguished all past Time into these three known Divisions, the *hidden* or unknown, the *mythic* or fabulous, and *historic* Time. They fixed indeed on different Computations for the ending the *mythic*, and the Beginning of *historic* Time. Thus *Varro*, the most learned of the *Romans*, is said by *Censorinus*, *de Die Natal. cap. 21.* to have fixed the Period of the *mythic* or fabulous Time, and the Beginning of the *historic*, at the first Olympiad. *Diodor. Siculus*, Lib. 4. tells us that *Epchorus*, omitting the Fables concerning ancient Times, began his History with the Return of the *Heracidae*. And *Diodorus* himself, following *Apollodorus*, thought that the *Trojan* War was the best *Epocha* both of History and Chronology.

BUT how singular is the Superiority of *Moses* above them all? Where is the *admiror*, the hidden or unknown Time of *Moses*? Where is his *mythic* or fabulous Time? He might enlarge more on some Periods, than others, as in the general History of the World. But there seems not to have been any *hidden* Time, concerning which he was at any more Loss for Information, than those concerning which he so distinctly writes; especially there were none, which appear to have been, on Account of their Distance, more obscure, than those which were nearer. He is altogether as clear in his Accounts of the Creation, as the Flood; and the Plantation of the Antediluvian as the Postdiluvian World; and the Condition of Mankind near each of these remarkable Periods.

THE Heathen Writers do not only confess their Want of Information concerning the earliest Times, but they actually begin their History with such absurd, incredible Fables, as will constrain those Readers, who are most prejudiced in Favour of *Pagan* Antiquity, to believe their own Confession, that they had an hidden and *mythic* Time, before their *historic*. It must be acknowledged that every History is modern compared with the *Hebrew*; there is not now *one* Historian in the World, who pretends to have lived so remote or distant in Time, as the Egression from *Egypt*, in which grand Transaction *Moses* was an acting Party. All *Porphyry's* Labours ended in acknowledging that *one Pagan* Writer, *Sanctoniathon*, lived not far from the Times of *Moses*, and that he was the most ancient he could name; yet all these Writers, tho' so recent and modern, have each of them laid the Foundations of most Kingdoms



doms and Nations in such palpable Fables and Fictions, as demonstrate their Originals to lie quite beyond the Enquirer's Reach, and that they had no genuine Records of their own Origin and Rise.

2. THE History of *Moses* is composed of such grand Materials, and relates Events of such vast Moment and Consequence in themselves, and in the Knowledge of which Mankind is so deeply concerned, that there can be no Equal to it produced, among all the Monuments of Antiquity.

THE Materials of this History are some of them so vast, that no common Writer could ever have aspired to attempt any Account of them; or dilated his Mind to any Compass equal or proportional to so grand and vast a Subject. With what Pertinency or Propriety can such Worms as we speak of the Creation of the World! It is a Subject too big for our Faculties to grasp!

AND yet *Moses* sets about the Relation of this Event, even of the Creation itself, as if he had been going to describe some common Incident. He first assigns the invisible Operator, which no created Eye ever saw; and then the Materials out of which he wrought this stupendous Frame, out of all its mixed and chaotic Confusion, into Proportion, Beauty, Harmony and Order. He describes the Beginning, Progress, and orderly Succession of each Part of this Work, like a Spectator, who had been favoured with some eminent Situation for making Observations on the Progress of the Work; and relateth it accordingly, even with the Accuracy of an Eye-Witness; and with the Dignity of one, who could judge of such Operations. He has described all in such an Order, as hath astonished all who have read it; and in a Sublime of Narration which is without parallel. Which *Longinus* himself observed, vid. *Thema*, 9. of his celebrated Book *περί ὑψηλοῦ*. in which he remarks, that "the famous Hebrew Lawgiver, having exalted Notions of the Power of God, speaks with an answerable Dignity of it, in these Words, *God said let there be Light, and it was so.*" Every Thing is in apt Succession to the Parts which went before. There was produced out of the formless Chaos, first the Earth, a solid, opaque Sphere or Globe, with its surrounding Waters or fluid Substance. Then the great Fountain of Light was created to distinguish the different Objects in the material World. Then as there was an Expanse of Air, Æther, or other mixed Fluid, diffused over the Surface of the Earth, this being separated into Fluids of different Density on Solidity, left the dry Land visible. When it did appear, it was soon covered with Grass and Fruits on its Surface; then there were Animals prepared to make use of them; and at last *Man* was created with an intellectual Nature to govern them, for which Province that Nature would qualify him. Now all this History was out of the Reach of any *Man* to discover, and so must come to the first human Relater of it, by Revelation. And if we have *Pagan* Cosmogonies in Imitation of this *Mosaic* Cosmogony, yet the Coarseness of all the Copies do but magnify the Original from which they are borrowed.

MOSES, in the like Grandeur of Plan, proceeds to give us an Account of the original State of Mankind, his Innocency and Felicity in Paradise. And this is an Article of the *Mosaic* History only. He then relates the Introduction



roduction of Sin and Misery with it, into this World. Another important Article which is peculiar to the *Mosaic* History. And indeed it is almost impossible to conceive that these two should come asunder, or that either of them should come alone.

HISTORIANS can be copious enough in recounting the Crimes, Follies and Calamities of Mankind, but they knew nothing of their Original and Introduction, or that Misery came in upon a Forfeiture of Happiness, which is in a most regular Course of moral Government, that Punishment should follow Sin; but what a Number of Cavils would have been made against this Dispensation, had it been represented thus, that *Misery* came in *arbitrarily*, by the ordaining of a Sovereign Providence, without *Sin* on our Part to deserve it?

WHAT a Redundancy of moral Philosophers would the World have abounded with, such as of late have disgraced the Name! But there is no such Constitution of Things mentioned by *Moses*; according to him eating the *forbidden* Fruit, or express Disobedience to a plain and easy Law, went before the Sentence of Death; and this Event they were apprised of, by an express Threatening of that Punishment, before they sinned.

WHERE must we go among all the choicest Records of *Paganism*, to find any Thing parallel to the *Importance* of these Scriptural Subjects. Fables, and minute, low, mean Subjects we may meet with enough of, but nothing that tends to raise and mend the Heart. We find some Account of a golden Age, but it is rather an Age of Indolence than Virtue. Whereas the *Paradisaic* State of *Moses* had *Religion* introduced into it, among the first Things. There was an *hallowed* Rest, in Memorial of the finishing of the Creation by One God; and a *Law* of God, which required their first Attention. *Again*; their Gods rather sported with the Weakness, than animadverted on the Crimes of Men. Hence the strange Fable of *Pandora's* Box, filled with an odd Mixture of Good and Evil, which promiscuously diffused itself among Mankind, not procured by *Guilt*, but *arbitrarily* disseminated thro' all the human Kind.

Now this Comparison greatly illustrates the superlative Excellency of the *Mosaic* History above all the boasted Monuments of ancient *Paganism*.

3. If we consider the excellent Manner of drawing up this History, it will further demonstrate the Superiority of the *Mosaic*, to any one Monument of ancient *Paganism*. It was, as I suppose, the very first Book that ever was in the World. And yet by the Perfection, Propriety and Correctness of its Composition, it might have been drawn up, after the Writing of History was become a finished Art. It seems not to have needed any Pattern, but rather fit to have been a Pattern itself, of the most correct and judicious Composition. There is nothing of Redundancy, to give Nauseum or Disgust to any Reader, nor any undue Curtness and Brevity to create Obscurity; allowing for some Difficulties in a dead Language, and an Eastern Idiom of Speech.

THERE is nothing wanting in *true* Elegancy of Diction and Narration, nothing too finical and puerile for its Subjects, which would rather debase than ennoble the Story. Yet tho' there is in the *Mosaic* History the greatest  
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Simplicity, there is the greatest Dignity and Propriety, accommodated to every Subject of which it treateth. There is, again, nothing wanting that we can think necessary for its Clearness, Intelligibleness and Perspicuity.

WHEN *Moses* comes to speak of human Actions, there is a proper Mixture of every Thing necessary for Illustration of his Narrative.

THERE is Geography to set forth intelligibly *where* or about what *Place* these Events happened which he relates; there is Chronology to enable us to discern *when* or about what *Time* they happened; there is Character to inform us *who* were the Parties concerned in them; and an intelligible Account of *what* was done or suffered, as far as any reasonable Curiosity can think necessary.

UPON the full View of this History, it looks not like a first Essay, tho' I think it certainly was one. In all human Compositions, *first Attempts* of any Kind have generally some Coarsenesses and Inaccuracies in them, which indicate them to be so. But in *Moses's* Hand, History was a perfect Thing at the first. Tho' there appears a noble Simplicity, yet it is all along as grand as the Subject requires. When he wrote of Creation, the greatest Critics have observed a matchless Sublimity. And when he descends to Biography, it is plain and orderly and intelligible, analogous to the Subject, and just such as may be expected in this Kind of History.

4. THE History of *Moses* is attended with great Probability, as to all the Things which he relates, in all the Variety either of divine or human Acts. It cannot be justly objected to him, that any of the Particulars he rehearses are in themselves *impossible*. Another *Tindal* must arise, to finish what his Predecessor left as dark as he found it, before the rational World will believe it impossible, that God can by Revelation teach Men any thing relating to their greatest Interests, which they knew not before; or that there is such a Perfection in the human Capacities, that they will not admit of Additions by Inspiration. Many Propositions and Doctrines laid down in the Writings of *Moses* may be justly considered as Branches of History.

AND when he declareth that he received certain Laws from God, and that he taught the People certain great Points of divine Truth, which he received in an extraordinary Manner from on high. Sure this may be allowed to be *possible* in itself. If *Moses* should assert that he received these Informations by immediate Inspiration, and that these Sentiments were infused into his Mind by the Deity himself. Or otherwise, that he had these Instructions by a Message from the Almighty, by the Mouth of an Angel; either of these Accounts are *possible*, and when attended with proper Circumstances to make them credible, may accordingly be embraced.

BUT further; if there were many stupendous Miracles of an extraordinary and visible, sensible Kind wrought by him, before Thousands of Spectators both Friends and Enemies, of which Events they were most unexceptionable Witnesses, as the Miracles of *Egypt*; I cannot see how this can be rationally denied to be probable History. For this is expressly asserted by one original



Author, who was personally concerned in working all these Miracles; and *denied* or contradicted by none, either from Traditions at that Time, or any written Accounts since.

AGAIN, this Narrative is most naturally told to engage an impartial Reader's Belief. For these Miracles are all ascribed to the Almighty, who certainly had *Power* to work them. And then they were wrought for such Ends, as may induce us to think it *probable* that God *might* thus interpose, according to this express Historical Affirmation, that he *did* do so.

AND further, one declared End of God's extraordinary Appearance at that Time in such a Series of Miracles, was to publish his own Laws, especially to the *Hebrew Nation*. *Exod. xix. 3, 4, 5, 6. Thus shalt thou say to the Children of Israel, you have seen what I did to the Egyptians—Now therefore, if ye will obey my Voice, and keep my Covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar Treasure unto me above all People; for all the Earth is mine.*

Now if, as an Introduction to the Establishment of this divine Law, God prefixed a sufficiently large Account of the Creation, the Fall; and other necessary primitive Truths, which it is evidently so useful to be acquainted with; which probably were either in a great Measure lost, or but confusedly remembered in their broken, shattered Traditions. May not all this be allowed very probable?

AND again, as it was so necessary a Point to secure to the World the grand capital Doctrine of the divine *Unity*, in the growing *Polytheism* of that Age; why may it not be very *probable* that God should *chuse* one Nation, which was not then gone into Polytheism, to make it the special Repository of that and some other grand Truths? And then *separate* that chosen People, by several Peculiarities in their Laws and National Institutions, to keep them more distinct and disunited from the rest of the World? Hereby they might be the Preservers of those Truths for what Length of Time he should think fit, before they should in the Fulness of Time be more generally communicated.

5. ANOTHER manifest Superiority of the *Mosaic History*, to any ancient *Pagan Histories*, consists in its being more determinate and punctual, and peremptory than any other. It is the freest from, and even void of any *Hesitations* and Dubiousness, whether he speaks of nearer or more remote Ages. There never appears to be any Want of Information, as I have noted before.

WHEN he writes of the Progress of the Creation, of which there could be no Human Witnesses, yet he is as clear and punctual, and peremptory in his Narration of that great Event, as if he had been looking on during all the orderly Succession. There is the like determinate and unhesitating Account of the Paradisaical State, of Innocence and the Fall, and the Consequences of the first Sin. The same again as to the State of the World before, at, and after the Flood.

THEN when he proceeds to Biography, or Domestick, National History; he has no Doubts, as to the Original of the *Hebrew Nation*. He is punctually



tually clear in the whole Account of its Descent, from *Terah*, his Transplantation from *Chaldæa*, and Migration to *Haran*. And that the proper Founder of their Nation was *Abraham*, famous for his Ancestors up to *Noah*, and even to *Adam*. And for his Posterity *Ishmael*, but especially, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, and his Descendants, regularly computed to the Time of *Moses's* drawing up his History; all the Line is clear, but there is nothing parallel to this among the Histories of any ancient *Pagan* Nations.

THE *Egyptian* Priests founded their Monarchy in the Dominion of the Gods, and for *Menes*, who reigned next after the Gods, they knew nothing either *who* or *whence*, or *when* he was.

THE *Argives*, esteemed the most ancient Nation of *Greece*, knew not their supposed Founder *Inachus*, whether he was a Man, or only the Name of a River, or a River God, according to the stupid Mythology of those Times. They had equal Disputes whether *Io* was his Daughter, or one of his Posterity many Descents lower, which made great Alterations in their Accounts of Time, as to the Birth of *Apis* and *Bacchus*.

THE *Sicyonians* differed many Generations, as to the Ages of *Apis* and *Epa-phus*, whom *Herodotus* took to be the same Men. And even the most grand Family of *Greece*, the *Heracidae*, who descended from *Hercules*, and from whom the Kings of *Sparta* derive their haughty Lineage, differ no fewer than six Generations, computing from *Eurydice* the Daughter of *Sparta* and *Lacedæmon*, and Sister of *Amyclas*. There are like Difficulties and Incongruities, as to the *Athenian* Kings, the Successors of *Cecrops*; and almost all the other *Greek* Successions. And yet the *Greeks* are much the most perfect in their Genealogies of their first Ages, which I take to be owing to the bringing of Letters by *Cadmus*, so soon after these Planters of *Greece* arrived, of which they had any Remembrance in their most ancient Stories. And even *Rome* itself is a Stranger to its own Antiquities, and *who* or *when* *Romulus* and *Remus* were, and whether they were Founders of this great City which came to be the Metropolis of the World, or not. This Dubiousness of the *Roman* Antiquities many of their Writers complain of, especially *Livy*; and they ascribe it to this, that most of their Monuments of Antiquity perished, when the City was burnt by the *Gauls*.

IN this Case the Authors might be faithful as far as they could go; but the History wanted due Perfection, through a Defect of Informations; which cannot be charged on the *Hebrew* Historians, nor do they ever complain of such Defect.

6. THERE is a great Harmony and Consistency, and Proof of Impartiality in the *Hebrew* Historians. In those which succeeded *Moses*, they in general in every material Point agree *with* him, even when they wrote several Hundred Years *after* him. We may reasonably conclude that the Books of *Moses* were very nearly the same which they are *now*, at the End of *Joshua's* Life; for he relates many Things concerning the Origin of the Nation in the same Manner, *Josh. xxiv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.* and so on.



THERE are also several Things in the Book of *Judges*, in which is an Agreement with the Story in the Books of *Moses*. As *Judg.* vi. 8, 9, 10.

AND again in the *Times* of *David* and *Solomon*, there are many References to the *Mosaic* History. As many *Psalms*, particularly reciting these Facts, which were either composed about that Time, or were then in Use.

THEN again the Book of *Chronicles* contains many Things agreeable to the *Mosaic* Genealogies, which were continued to the End of the Monarchy.

AND further, there is a plain Account of many Particulars related by *Moses*, the Memorials of which were successively renewed, thro' the Course of their whole National History. Thus the Division of the whole Nation into *Twelve* Tribes, from *Jacob's* twelve Sons. Thus the *Country* said to be divided by *Moses* and *Joshua*, continued in Possession of that People to the Captivity; and even to the Christian Times. Further, several Laws and a Ritual of Worship said to be drawn up by *Moses*, with several Offices successive in one Family, that of *Aaron*, were observed to the Time of *Christ*; so that the History of *Moses* is testified to, by not only their own successive Prophets, but also by *Christ* and his Apostles themselves.

I MAY further add, that there are the greatest Marks of Fairness and Impartiality through the whole *Hebrew* History, when it descended from a general to a national Story. All their Faults are mentioned with as much Freedom, and commonly with as much Severity, as their Virtues are with Encomium. As particularly in the Case of the Partiality of *Isaac* and *Rebecca* to their Children; and all the Fraud and Artifice of *Jacob* in procuring the Family Blessing. And as to those Things which may be called national Disgrace, *Moses* fully relates the first Obscurity of their long, unsettled wandering Condition; then their servile Oppression in *Egypt*; then their frequent Murmurings in the Wilderness, which in the Historian's own Opinion, was great Infamy; then their frequent Revolts and Apostacies to Idolatry, and succeeding Oppressions on that Account; which is always ascribed to their Impiety and Wickedness, and not to the Fortune of War.

BUT we find, particularly in the *Roman* History, several ignoble Instances of their Concealment of Events which they thought not honourable to the *Roman* Name to mention. Thus in the famous War with *Porfenna* King of *Etruria*, just after the Expulsion of the Kings, who besieged *Rome*, and reduced it to great Extremities. Tho' the Bulk of their Historians acknowledge those Extremities, yet there is a profound Silence among them, either as to the taking of the City, or the Conditions on which it was taken. And yet *Tacitus* owns that it was taken by *Porfenna*, in his *Historiarum*, Lib. 3. *prope fin.* and *Pliny* in *Nat. Hist.* Lib. 34. c. 14. has preserved one Article of the League or Treaty with *Porfenna*, viz. "That the *Romans* were to make "no Use of Iron, but in Agriculture or Husbandry." Now the *Roman* Historians account for the raising the Siege, from the Generosity of the Besieger, who was charmed with the Bravery of the *Romans*, and therefore amicably withdrew his Forces.

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BUT the *Hebrew* Historians twice make mention of that very Circumstance in their Oppressions, that they were not permitted to have any military Weapons. *Judg.* v. 8. and in *1 Sam.* xiii. 19, 20.

THERE is also a like Complaint of the Partiality of the *Romans* in many other Instances, which are in Part pointed to by the great *Polybius*. *Fabius Pictor*, their most ancient Historian, lived in *Hannibal's* Time, and wrote of the *Punic War*; *Philinus* wrote on the same Subject, the latter partial to the *Carthaginians*, the former to the *Romans*.\* By the Consideration of all which it appeareth that the *Hebrew* History was far more excellent than the *Pagan* Histories were, in every Thing which can be esteemed the Perfection of History.

7. I WOULD observe some other Peculiarities of the *Mosaic* Books, in which they have a manifest Precedency to all ancient Books besides.

IT has often appeared to me astonishing, that in so narrow a Compass of Writing, there should be methodically comprised so distinct an History of such a long Space of Time. In a few of the first Chapters of *Genesis*, is contained the History of above 1600 Years before the Flood, and above 400 Years after the Flood, more than 2000 Years in all.

AND that there should be no Gap or Chasm void of successive Actions, and a regular Computation of Time, during this 2000 Years. And further, that these few Chapters should give an Account of so many most important Events, the Effects of which we see to this Day; such as Man's becoming sinful and mortal. And then again, that this should be the *only* History of those distant Times, ever heard of in the World, that is intelligible or credible, or worthy of any Regard.

I CANNOT think that any of the *Cosmogonies* or *Pagan* Accounts of the Origin of Things, were really extracted from the Traditions, which continued in the World, at the Time when these *Cosmogonies* were composed; but rather, that they were spurious Copies of *Moses*, or Imitations of him; and accordingly so far as they depart from this Original, they are always absurd and senseless Fables. And yet I confess there may be a Mixture in them, as the *Abbe Banier* of the Royal Academy of Inscriptions and *Belles Lettres*, says,† “ The Theogony of the *Greeks* is a monstrous Composition of History and Fable, where we see every Moment Physics of a gross Nature, blended with distorted Traditions; natural Generations mixed with metaphorical ones; Names plainly allegorical along with those that are real.” In which Account he has *Hesiod* in his Eye; for he adds, — “ The whole was collected by *Hesiod* in a Kind of Poem, that has neither Art, Invention, nor any Charm, unless it be a few splendid Epithets with which he has set it off.”

FURTHER (2.) It has often appeared to me equally surprizing, that when *Moses* afterwards confines himself to a very narrow Subject, even that of Biography, or the domestic History of a few plain Men; that he should find it

\* Vid. *Polyb. Lib.* 6.

† *Banier, Mythology of Antients. Expl.* p. 118. *Engl.*



it so prodigious copious of Informations. These Persons, whose History he writes, *Abram*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, were of no public Character, nor of great Eminency of Condition. They had not a Foot of Land in the World, no Territory or Country, and therefore could not have much Sway or Authority, except just of a domestic Kind over a few Servants. And yet Providence ordered their Condition to be in such a peculiar Manner *Travellers* from one Country to another, and appointed them such Variety of occasional Settlements, that in the natural Course of their plain History we are led to a Knowledge of the Manners and Customs of all those Ages and Countries, which were contemporary with those Patriarchs, or that were in Vicinity to the Places of their several sojourning. We have so correct an Account of their Religion, Government, Policies, Arts and Wars, as is no where else to be met with. How astonishing is it, that the domestic Story of these few private Men should convey a regular History of almost all the World at that Time, better than any national History that has ever been heard of; or than all put together, relating to those Ages! An History of *Ninus* and *Semiramis* furnishes us with no natural Manners, or genuine Antiquities, or any regular Chronology, by which to judge whether they were, from their Distance from the Plantation of the World, natural or not. But by the Computations of those who have endeavoured to synchronize their Story with *Hebrew* Times, they end in nothing but Absurdities, and prove that they are an Heap of incongruous Fables. But what as much as any Thing raiseth my Admiration, is the Chronology, or the Accounts of Time in the Works of *Moses*. For by this knowing the Distance of any Events from the Plantation of the World, we can better judge, whether the Story is synchronal to Nature or not. But in all *Pagan* History there is an entire Defect as to this material Point; there is no Foundation on which to build any Calculation concerning the Distance of any Event from the Beginning of the World.

THO' *Greece* and *Rome* were not at that Time when *Moses* wrote; yet those Nations which were then in being, as *Egypt*, *Canaan*, *Cham*, &c. knew nothing, or have recorded nothing of their Original, which hath come down to us. But God, who foresaw all the Course of Human Things, could find a Way of *inserting* properly all that was necessary to be known of those remote Ages; and especially the Chronology, without which, every Story would be an obscure, inconnected Thing. From the Consideration of these Things it will be obvious how vastly the *Hebrew* History has the Advantage of all other ancient ones.

In this Enquiry into ancient Knowledge, I have accordingly chiefly regarded the Informations of *Moses* as a good Historian; and have had less Dependence on the Fragments of the most ancient *Pagan* Writers, and this for a further plain Reason, that they all appear to me so very modern compared with him. This any inquisitive Person will, I think, allow to be a Consideration of Moment in such a Case. I apprehend myself to have proved that Letters were not known before *Moses*, and that probably they obtained  
not



not in any other Nation but the *Jews*, for several Ages after their Discovery to him. So that the first Writers that could be among the Heathen, must live so long after the ancient Facts, that the Traditions they had to extract from, must be almost good for nothing, so many Ages distant, and in so great a Reduction of Man's Life. Agreeable hereto I have endeavoured to shew, that the most boasted Antiquities of the *Pagan* Nations, those of the *Assyrians* and *Egyptians*, must pass for little among authentic Histories, but rather be esteemed as chiefly fabulous. And the *Greeks* themselves are extremely defective. Because they have but a short Space of Time from the Beginning of their historic Age, and therefore must have a large Space before their History began, which is one great Blank or Void, of which they can give no Account. And yet all this Line of Duration is filled up with Action by the *Hebrew* Historians.

THIS Subject hath been indeed treated of by many eminent Writers ancient and modern; but they have gone into such different Sentiments, that one cannot well take any of them entirely for a Guide. Sir *John Marsham* observes, that *Eusebius* has been most followed by modern Authors, and that his Chronology, however broken, is scarcely confided in by most \* later Writers. But I cannot but think (as Mr. *Shuckford* and others have observed) that *Eusebius* was betrayed into the Scheme of magnifying the Heathen Antiquities too much, from a certain Panick which this Objection of *Porphyrus*'s put him into, viz. "That the *Mosaic* History was too ancient to be genuine." He therefore espoused the Fictions of *Ctesias* as to the *Assyrians* and the Dynasties of *Manetho*; and the Fables of the *Sicyonians*, *Argives*, and other *Greek* Colonies, which he might easily have confuted, and demonstrated the Recency of them; out of the *Pagan* Authors, which then remained entire. Since the great *Newton* has carried it so far, out of those Writings which now remain only Fragments. But tho' Sir *John Marsham*'s Observation may be in Part true, that the Moderns might in some Things be too sequacious and implicit in following *Eusebius*, yet they most of them widely differ. *Scaliger*, *Petavius*, *Selden*, *Usher*, *Vossius*, *Perizonius*, Dean *Prideaux* and Bishop *Cumberland* on different Parts of this Subject, have fallen into such Diversity of Opinions, that one need not be discouraged at departing from their Track, when almost every one takes a new one of their own. But tho' I have received great Help in this Work, from all these learned and laborious Authors, as well as many later than them, yet those whom I have chiefly followed are our learned Dr. *John Owen* in his *Theologoumena*: As to his Account of the ancient Idolatry, and the Original of Letters; tho' I had not the Happiness to meet with that Work till I had been several Years engaged in this Design. I have received great Assistance from the very learned Sir *John Marsham*, whom I have followed in the Age of *Sesostris*, tho' not in his Method of calculating from *Menes*; and also as to *Assyrian* Antiquities, I have likewise been

\* *Ista quidem Chronologia, præfractè instituta, à recentioribus securè recepta est. Marsh. Can. Chron. in Præf.*



been much assisted by the learned Professor *Jameson* of *Glasgow*, who in his *Specilegia Egypt. Antiquit.* has so many judicious Observations on the Uncertainty of ancient *Pagan* History, and the Excellency of the sacred History, for rectifying the Errors of the other; that indeed he seems almost to have seen the Day, as to the Faultiness of the ancient Chronology, which shone forth so clearly by the Labours of Sir *Isaac Newton*.

BUT above all, I have followed the great Sir *Isaac Newton* almost generally in his Chronology. He has entered into the Subject with such a masterly Freedom of Enquiry, and pursued it with that singular Penetration and Sagacity, as to break down from before him almost all the Difficulties which seemed, and only seemed, to stand in his Way. He was the first who ventured to call in Question the whole Body of the ancient *Pagan* Chronology; tho' there had been many who disputed particular Parts of it. And probably there may not be many found hereafter to undertake the Vindication of it, after what that great Man urged against it has been thoroughly considered.

I HAVE not in this Work intermeddled with several of the Niceties in Chronology, such as adjusting the precise Day or Year in which any noted Events happened; for I not only despaired of succeeding in it, but apprehended it unnecessary. What I have proposed to settle is, *about* what Time or Age they happened. Hereby we discover clearly enough, what different Events were prior or posterior to each other, and this is in general, as far as it seems necessary to carry our Enquiries into such ancient Times.

THIS Essay has not been hastily drawn up, I having been several Years engaged in it. But as I had not much stated Leisure, being employed in pretty large Pastoral Work, so I was frequently obliged to have great Intervals of Cessation, in which I could make little Progress in my Preparations for it. Hereby must be occasioned many Inaccuracies, which in a Work carried on in such an interrupted, broken Manner, were not easy to avoid, and will therefore I hope be more easy to excuse by the candid Reader.

As it is I now present it to the World. And I heartily pray that it may be of some Service to promote the Interests of Truth and Religion; to illustrate and vindicate those Parts of sacred History which have been most cavilled at; and further to manifest their superior Excellency to any Compositions of the ancient *Paganism* whatsoever; and hereby further to engage all Kinds of Readers to a greater Veneration and Esteem for their Bibles.



# CONTENTS

## OF THE

### FIRST VOLUME.

#### CHAP. I.

*ON History in General, p. 7.*

SECT. 1. *On the Nature of History, p. 8.*

SECT. 2. *On the Original of Language, p. 9.*

SECT. 3. *On the general Dispositions of Mankind to communicate their Affairs, p. 11.*

#### CHAP. II.

*On Original religious Knowledge, p. 16.*

SECT. 1. *On the primitive Facts from which religious Knowledge was, or might have been derived, p. 17.*

SECT. 2. *On the second Fountain of primitive religious Knowledge, their reasoning from those Facts, p. 31.*

#### CHAP. III.

*On the New Testament Doctrine of a future State, p. 51.*

SECT. 1. *Objection stated against the Opinion of the Antediluvians having a Notion of a future State, p. 51.*

SECT. 2. *On the New Testament Doctrine of a future State, being a State of Consciousness, ibid.*

SECT. 3. *On those Texts which may be thought to imply, that there was no Knowledge of a future State before the Gospel, p. 54.*

#### CHAP. IV.

*On Tradition to the Flood, p. 61.*

SECT. 1. *On the Line of Succession of the Antediluvian Patriarchs, p. 66.*

SECT. 2. *On the Longevity of those Patriarchs, p. 69.*

#### CHAP. V.

*On Tradition from the Flood to the Dispersion, p. 81.*

SECT.



## CONTENTS of the FIRST VOLUME.

SECT. 1. *On the Knowledge which Noah himself had before the Flood came, p. 81.*

SECT. 2. *On the Facts and Revelations about the Time of the Flood, which were subjoined to Noah's Stock of ancient Knowledge; by all which he could further instruct the New World in Religion, p. 85.*

SECT. 3. *On the similar Manner in which the Old and New World were instructed in Religion, p. 88.*

SECT. 4. *On the Means of conveying this general System of Knowledge from the Flood to the Dispersion, p. 92.*

### C H A P. VI.

*Tradition from the Dispersion to Moses, p. 98.*

*Plainly shewing that the Separation of Mankind could not take Place soon after the Flood.*

SECT. 1. *On the Improvement of an Original or Mother Country, before the Dispersion, p. 102.*

SECT. 2. *On the Conveniency and Necessity of a Dispersion, p. 103.*

SECT. 3. *The general Dispersion one Event, belonging to one Period, p. 105.*

SECT. 4. *On the general Dispersion being under the Direction of Noah, p. 107.*

SECT. 5. *The general Dispersion finished by the Confusion of Languages, p. 108.*

SECT. 6. *On the Confusion of Languages, p. 116.*

### C H A P. VII.

*On the Time of the General Dispersion, p. 129.*

SECT. 1. *Peleg's Name doth not prove that the Division was at the Time of his Birth, p. 130.*

SECT. 2. *There could not be competent Numbers in the World for the Dispersion at Peleg's Birth, p. 131.*

SECT. 3. *On the plain Characters of Time set down by Moses for determining about what Time the Dispersion was, p. 133.*

### C H A P. VIII.

*On the Persons concerned in the General Dispersion, p. 139.*

SECT. 1. *The Mother Country not deserted nor left to the younger Generations, p. 140.*

SECT. 2. *The Dispersion conducted by Peleg and his Contemporaries, ibid.*

SECT. 3. *On the inhabiting the Mother Country after the Dispersion, by the more aged Persons, p. 141.*

SECT. 4. *The Longeval Patriarchs travelled not along with the several Colonies they sent out, proved by several Arguments, p. 144.*

### C H A P. IX.

*On the Valedictory Instruction of the Tribes, before they went off from Noah, p. 148.*

### C H A P. X.

*On the Decays of Tradition after the General Dispersion took Place, p. 150.*

SECT. 1. *The Causes of the Decay of Tradition after the Dispersion, to the Time of giving the Law, p. 151.*

SECT. 2. *The Length of Time from the Dispersion to the giving the Law, p. 154.*

SECT.



## DEDICATION.

I NOW, Sir, respectfully inscribe this Treatise to you, and recommend it to your candid Perusal in it's enlarged Compass. I hope you will find some Satisfaction in the Account I have given of the Propagation of Knowledge from *Adam* to *Noah*, and from him to the general Dispersion; as also in the Account of the Time, Circumstances and Parties concerned in the Dispersion, which came not within my View in my first Chronological Compend. The Hint of the Date of Letters from *Moses*, which I first met with many Years ago, in Sir *Charles Woolsey's Reasonableness of Scripture Belief*, I have taken much Pains with, and hope this, with the Time of the transferring of the Art of Writing from the *Jews* to the *Heathen* Nations, will help to determine the Antiquity of *Pagan* Writings within pretty certain Limits.

I ACCOMPANY this small Token of my sincere Respect, with my best Wishes for your true Felicity in both Worlds,

*And am,*

*Dear Sir, with great Esteem,*

*your very affectionate,*

*and faithful humble Servant,*

H. WINDER.

PRE-



DEDICATION

I now, Sir, respectfully inscribe this Treatise to you, and  
recommend it to your candid Pencil in its enlarged Compartment.  
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translating of the Art of Writing from the first to the  
Hebrew Nations will help to determine the Antiquity of  
Paper Writing within pretty certain Limits.  
I accompany this small Token of my sincere Respect,  
with my best Wishes for your true Felicity in both Worlds.

And am,

Dear Sir, your Obedient Servant,

Your very affectionate Son,

and faithful humble Servant,

WILLIAM DICKINSON

PRINTED



**WILLIAM SHAWE, Esq;**

**O. F.  
P R E S T O N,**

**I N T H E  
County-Palatine of LANCASTER.**

**DEAR SIR,**

**I** KNOW not any Persons who have a better Right to have this inscribed to them, than yourself. For it was properly yours at first. And if it prove to be of any Service to the promoting *Religious Knowledge*, Truth and Virtue, and clearing any Difficulties in Chronology and ancient History, the World is chiefly indebted for it to You. I had not turned my Thoughts in any particular Application to this Subject, till a Family Occasion induced me to it.

BUT when I married your pious and excellent Mother, and your Education in tender Years, fell, in a greater Measure, under my Care; I frequently considered in what I could be most subservient to your further Improvement in your growing Age. Many judicious Men have observed, That *History* of Times past is a particularly suitable Study



## DEDICATION.

for young Gentlemen of Fortune, to fill up their Time ; amidst the Avocations of Wealth and Pleasure, of which they may be in some Danger. And I was solicitous, that you might have all the Assistance, which the Sister Sciences of *Geography* and *Chronology* could minister to you in that Study, when you should apply to it. In Pursuit of this Design, I drew up, after *Geography*, a short general System of *Chronology*, which I endeavoured to render most easy and intelligible, in order to be the most useful to young Minds. Sir *Isaac Newton's* Chronology had been published a few Years before ; and accordingly, I composed my Chronological Compend on the *Newtonian* Plan for your private Use, and without any Thoughts of proceeding further.

BUT in the Course of that short Essay, so many Things occurred, which I apprehended worthy of larger Disquisition, that I was insensibly led into a much wider Scheme. Upon this I set myself to a particular Study of those Points, with the Help of all the Authors I could procure, which have for about twelve Years employed most of the Time I could spare from other necessary Service. Hereby I was engaged in these laborious Scrutinies into Antiquity, both Speculative and Historic ; the Result whereof is comprised in this Work.

I FOUND it frequently difficult to get forward, both from the Scarcity of Materials, and also the Diversity of Sentiments of great Men on almost every Part of the Subject that fell under my Consideration. But as I know your Acquaintance with the Principles of Liberty and free Enquiry, I am in no Fear of being censured by you, for any candid Latitude and Freedom in my differing from any Great Men. Our Relation, as well as my Knowledge of your Temper, prevents my *drawing*, or your having the Pain of *seeing* any of the fulsome Dawb of Dedications ; which are too often Paintings so unlike, that Our Heads on Sign Posts would scarce be less for Our Honour.

I NOW,



## CONTENTS of the FIRST VOLUME.

SECT. 3. *On the Preservation of Tradition in the Abrahamic Family,* p. 155.

### CHAP. XI.

*On Idolatry and its Antiquity,* p. 158.

SECT. 1. *Idolatry very ancient, being begun not long after the Flood,* p. 159.

SECT. 2. *Idolatry introduced plausibly and with Caution,* p. 160.

SECT. 3. *No good Account of the true Origin of Idolatry, from Pagans,* p. 163.

SECT. 4. *Idolatry not before the General Dispersion,* p. 164.

### CHAP. XII.

*On the Kinds of ancient Idolatry,* p. 168.

SECT. 1. *On the Worship of the Heavenly Bodies, or Sydereal Gods,* *ibid.*

SECT. 2. *On the Worship of spiritual and invisible Beings,* p. 174.

SECT. 3. *On the Worship of Statues and Images,* p. 179.

SECT. 4. *What Sorts of Images or Statues were the first in Use,* p. 186.

### CHAP. XIII.

*On the Accounts of Idolatry in the Books of Moses, &c.* p. 190.

SECT. 1. *Of Ashteroth,* p. 191.

SECT. 2. *Of Baal,* p. 195.

SECT. 3. *Of Moloch,* p. 199.

SECT. 4. *On the Groves,* p. 202.

### CHAP. XIV.

*On the Worship of Brute Images,* p. 204.

SECT. 1. *The only authentic, ancient History of Egypt is in the Pentateuch,* p. 205.

SECT. 2. *The Original of Brute Worship in and from Egypt,* p. 208.

SECT. 3. *The Source of the Worship of the Images of Bulls and Cows, from Pharaoh's Dream,* p. 209.

### CHAP. XV.

*On Hero Gods, or the Worship of dead Men deified,* p. 214.

SECT. 1. *Hero Gods not before the giving of the Law,* p. 216.

SECT. 2. *Images in Human Shape not before the Law,* p. 219.

SECT. 3. *The Distinction of Sex among the Pagan Gods not before the Law,* *ibid.* *On the Seasonableness of Revelation in Moses's Day,* p. 221.

### CHAP. XVI.

*On the Chronology of the Septuagint,* p. 223.

SECT. 1. *On the Arguments which have induced several Modern Critics to prefer the Greek Chronology to that of the Hebrew Original, after the latter had been so generally embraced, ever since the Revival of Learning,* p. 224.

SECT. 2. *On the Arguments by which the Greek Version, particularly its Chronology, came so early into Reputation, and maintained it so long,* p. 227. *Which Arguments are,*  
1. *The pompous Historical Accounts which are given of this Version,* p. 227. 2. *The celebrated Jewish Historian*



# CONTENTS of the FIRST VOLUME

Historian Josephus, following the  
Septuagint Computations, p. 233.  
3. The eldest and purest Ages of the  
Christian Church receiving the same  
Computations, p. 235.  
SECT. 3. The Solution of this Diffi-  
culty, as to the Difference between  
the Hebrew and Greek Chronology

attempted, p. 237. That the first  
Greek Translators corrupted the  
Numbers of Moses, out of a National  
Vanity, to magnify their Antiquities;  
and that there is no Evidence or Pro-  
bability, that the Jews or any others  
ever designedly corrupted the Hebrew  
Calculations.



INTRO.



# INTRODUCTION.

**T**HE Subject, I here propose to consider, will lead me to a distinct Examination, both of sacred and profane Antiquity; and to compare the one with the other. But the sacred Antiquity being familiarly known, and the profane hard to adjust, so as to gather any Certainty from it, that one might be discouraged from any new Attempt in this Study, on both Accounts, as it is unlikely to find any thing new in the one, or clear and satisfactory in the other. The few Remains of remote *Pagan* Antiquity are either of such doubtful Authority, or so much obscured with Allegory and Fable, that there must be great Difficulty in coming at any Certainty about the State of Knowledge in those antient Times. Besides, they have been so amply considered by learned Men, Antients and Moderns, that it may appear almost superfluous to bestow upon them any further Reviews.

New Materials or Vouchers cannot reasonably be expected in this Age of the World. The Curiosity and Industry of preceding Enquiries have precluded our Hopes, that any venerable Records do yet remain undiscovered, in the Ruins of antient Cities, Palaces, or Temples. And if there should be any, they must be so defaced by Time, as to be unintelligible. Accordingly, \**Marsham*, †*Perizonius*, and other laborious Enquirers, who have wrought most in the Rubbish of *Pagan* Antiquity, have greatly complained of the Difficulty of the Subjects in which they have severally engaged. I, says Sir *Jahn Marsham*, "attempt a Work, " obsolete thro' its great Antiquity, obscure on Account of the dubious Fidelity " of the Relations, and disdained for the Minuteness of the Subject; but the " Love of Truth surmounts all Difficulties."

But then it is obvious, that the learned Authors, who have taken most Pains in this Subject, have so greatly differed in their Accounts of *Pagan* Antiquity, in the Dates of the Events which they relate, in the Calculations of Times, in their Explications of Mythologies, and in applying all these to the *Scripture*  
A Chronology;

\* *Marsh. Canon. Chronic. Lib. I.* Opus aggredior vetustate obsoletum, fide ambigua obscurum, tenuitate fastiditum: sed difficultates superat veritatis amor,—illam studiorum amœnitatibus prætulisse honestum est.

† *Perizon. Origin. Babylon.* Ardui sane et multis difficultatibus impediti laboris aggreditur opus, qui res antiquissimi temporis eruendas sibi sumit.



Chronology; that, amidst such a Diversity of Opinions, there's Room enough still left for a further Examination. And again, *Sacred* Antiquity has been studied with such a View to the Profane, and to confirm its Authority by parallel Fragments among the latter; instead of allowing the *sacred Volumes* to be the only genuine Antiquity; that the Light, which they exhibited, has been often obscured, so that something new may be expected in them also.

Human Improvements are yet far from being perfect in any thing: Arts and Sciences are daily advancing. The Enlargement, which Natural Philosophy, in the last Century, has made in the Knowledge of the Book of Nature, that Book which has laid open before the World 5000 Years, may spirit one up to attempt almost any other Subject. Antient History may, indeed, seem in the Nature of the Thing almost incapable of receiving much new Light, since we are every Day farther removed from the Scene of Action, and can have no other Records to consult, besides those made use of already; yet, even in this Subject, if our Enquiries proceed on a new Plan, antient Monuments may be cited to answer a new Purpose, and be reasoned from in a different Manner; in which they may give greater Satisfaction than before. As for Instance, if the most antient *Pagan* Monuments have been made use of, to prove the high Date of *Pagan* Learning, their Sciences, Arts, and Empires, and those Points should not appear satisfactorily made out; a new Enquirer, by further comparing them with *sacred* Antiquity, may give these antient Memoirs a new Turn, and adduce them to prove the comparative Recency of these boasted Antiquities: Hereby they may be successfully made use of, to prove, what really is true, that they are comparatively *modern*; tho' they can never prove what is not true, that they are very antient.

My principal Design, in this Research into the antient *Pagan* Monuments, and comparing them with the *Hebrew* Scriptures, is this; *viz.* To dilucidate the State of Knowledge among Mankind from the Beginning, especially Religious Knowledge. And to trace the Line of Time, through which it advanced, or declined, in as exact Chronology as I am able. By a correct Knowledge of the Line of Time, we shall be able to judge of the natural Declension of Tradition at such a Distance from the Spring-head; and by a Knowledge of their Opinions and Superstitions, in any given Time, the Expediency of the Revelations, which were in the several Ages vouchsafed to the World, will be more conspicuous.

In Prosecution of this Design, I propose to consider the Origin of Religious Knowledge with *Adam*, its Progress and Propagation from *Adam* to *Noah*; and from *Noah* to the General Dispersion. Then, its gradual Declension and Decay, from the Dispersion to the Giving of the Law: Its Restoration by the Giving the Law, and the Writing the General History of the first Ages of Mankind, in the Book of *Genesis*. And finally, I shall consider the State of Religious Knowledge, from the Giving the Law to the Coming of *Christ*; when such a Plenitude of heavenly Science shone forth upon the benighted World. By this History I hope to illustrate the Benignity and Wisdom of Providence, in its Proceedings with Mankind, from the Beginning. It will appear how seasonably God interposed,

in



# I N T R O D U C T I O N.

iii

in a supernatural Way, in all the different Periods of *Revelation*; both for the Instruction of *Adam* at first, and for the Instruction and Reformation of the World afterwards; when it was involved in Ignorance, misguided by Error, and immersed in such an Abyss of Idolatry, Superstition, and enormous Vice, that there was no Probability of its being recovered, but by extraordinary Methods.

Many ancient Kingdoms have pretended to great Antiquity in their History of their Civil and Military Affairs; and modern Writers have employed much Labour in methodizing them, and reducing their broken shattered Memoirs to some Order and Consistency, by comparing them with the Scriptures. But no Author, that I know of, has fallen on this Plan, which I am pursuing, *viz.* examining the Rise and Propagation of Knowledge in this Manner of Criticism. I frequently am obliged to travel in untrodden Paths, and seldom meet with Guides, who are designedly going the same Way: But our Journeys frequently lie together for some Time; and while they are making out their several Points they are aiming at, offer many Things for my Direction, and subservient to my Design, which I thankfully make use of, in all Authors I have had the Sight of. But had I not apprehended that some Things of considerable Use and Importance yet remain to be said, on this Subject of religious Antiquity, which I have not met with in Books, I should never have thought of troubling the World with this Work. However, as there is a Dignity (at least) in my Subject, which must merit Regard; so there are Difficulties in it, which may entitle my Attempt to the good Nature of the Reader; and I promise myself the Candour of inquisitive and learned Men, tho' I should fail in executing so large a Scheme, entirely to Satisfaction. It may afford Hints to some abler Writer to supply my Defects, and hereby my *Essay* may be introductorily serviceable to the noble Cause of Truth and Religion.

HISTORY has been always esteemed a laudable Study; and an History of Knowledge in its various Stages, its Augmentations and Diminutions, with the Causes which operated for promoting its different States of Darkness or Light, must certainly be as useful as an History of Policies or Wars. And methinks Chronology and common History, when made use of, in Subserviency to this nobler Enquiry, are employed in the best Manner. It doth not appear to be of any great Consequence to the World, to determine when *Alexander* wasted the East, or *Cæsar* the West: What Rivers they passed, what Countries they depopulated or ravaged, or what unhappy Nations felt the Scourge of their Avarice or Ambition. It could be no great Loss to Mankind, if these Imperial Destroyers were blotted out of Remembrance: Their Relations of their savage Conquests and Tyrannies, may be as easily turned by the Sons of Ambition, to be Spurs and Patterns of new Oppressions, as they can be, to be Warnings against them; they may breed as many *Cæsars* as *Cato's*. But an Account of the Rise and Progress of Religious Knowledge, whereby the human Heart may be exalted to Piety and sublime Virtue; whereby the higher Powers of the Mind may better maintain their Superiority and Command over the animal and sensitive Propensions; and whereby the exorbitant and unnatural Passions of Avarice and Ambition may be curbed



and restrained; an History of this Kind, I say, seems to be useful to the World. Tho' we might well enough spare the Narratives of insidious Policies and destructive Wars, which are generally the licentious Triumphs and Usurpations of the Passions over right Reason.

There must, however, be some antient Account of the original Condition of human Nature, upon which to proceed in an History of their Knowledge: This must afford us the necessary *Data*, from which we must argue in the Investigation thereof. *Moses* is, indeed, an Historian of this Class, who furnishes copious Materials, on which to proceed in our investigating the State of antient Knowledge. He has given a general Narrative of the most eminent Dispensations of Divine Providence towards Mankind, from the Beginning; from which Religious Knowledge proceeded: He has described the primitive State of our Nature in Innocency and Happiness: That the human Race is derived from two Parents, who by their Creator were put under a particular Law: That they violated this Law, and hereby forfeited their original Happiness. After explaining this great Mystery, of the Introduction of Sin and Misery into the World, he relates the Intimations which God gave of his merciful Design for the Recovery of Mankind, and of the Methods he would make use of, for bringing it about. These are the most material Events and capital Transactions, relating to human Nature, in which every Age and Country is concerned; Transactions which should equally affect the Cottage and the Palace: They are not above the Mean, nor below the Great, and therefore obviously deserve the inquisitive Curiosity of all Men.

As to the Work itself; The History of *Moses* merits our greatest Veneration on every Account, which makes an History valuable. Whether we consider the high Antiquity of his Dates, or the vast Importance of his Materials; or the Exactness of his Chronology from the Beginning of the World to his own Times; or the Perfection of his Intelligence, as being an Eye-witness of the principal Facts in one Period, and an inspired Writer of all, as far as Inspiration could be necessary. Or, lastly, if we consider the seasonable Time of publishing his History, when the World, thro' the Decay of Tradition, stood most in Need of such a Work; and would have intirely lost Sight of its original State, without such an Help.

If from these Materials in the Books of *Moses*, it can be made to appear, That Mankind could have attained to a competent Knowledge of *Religion*, thro' all the first Ages, it must fully justify Divine Providence, against the petulant Cavils which Men of loose Minds have suggested, against the Equity of God's Administration; and may induce us more dutifully to reverence such Steps therein, as may yet appear to be mysterious. What Foundation can there be for atheistical Objections against the Benignity and Wisdom of God, in the Frame and Constitution of Things, when it appears that Sorrow came in by Sin? And, that no Sorrow came upon any that had not sinned, but what could and would be balanced by equivalent Good? What Foundation for Infidel Wonder can there be, that there should be *Sin* in the World, when it appears to have sprung from the Abuse



# I N T R O D U C T I O N.

v

Abuse of the Powers of Intellect and Will, or Liberty; Powers fitted for the greatest moral Excellence and Dignity: But Powers, which, in their very Nature, must be capable of a *wrong* Use, if they were capable of a *right* one. Many Objections have, indeed, been advanced against the *Scriptures*, and particularly the Books of *Moses*, by Men of very different Interests, and in distant Ages: But I apprehend, they all really terminate in this great Charge against them, that they are *Forgeries*; and that the Writers were daring and bold, or cunning and sly Impostors: That they relate miraculous Facts which never happened, and teach Doctrines as divine, which were of the Writer's own Invention.

I hope, therefore, it may be useful to set forth their Credit, as Historians, in the most critical Way: To clear up, as far as possible, their real Authenticity, and that they did write in that Age of the World, which, by their own Chronology, they pretend to; then to illustrate the noble Variety and Importance of their Materials; the natural Credibility of the Facts which they relate; and, in general, to justify their historic Perfection. And, on the other hand, it may be useful to set forth the Dubiousness of the Authority, the Contemptibleness of the Materials, and the low Dates of the Antiquities which are set in Competition with them: What real Impostures and palpable Deceits, the most venerated *Pagan* Monuments of their highest Antiquity, all of them are.



A C R I-







JUDAH.	EGYPT.	SPARTA under the HERACLIDÆ.	MESSE니아 under the HERACLIDÆ.	ACADIA under their own Kings, the PELASGIANS.	CORINTHIA under the HERACLIDÆ.	ASSYRIA and BABYLONIA.	MEDIA and PERSIA.
14 Amaziah	Afyehis. After this Reign, Egyptian Empire broke in several lesser Kingdoms.	Euryfthenes	Procles	Epytus	Bucolon	Telxion	
15 Uzziah	Anyfis. Gnephactus. So or Sabacon upon that Devotion, conquered Egypt. Many Egyptians fled to Babylon Founded the Æra of Nabonassar. Sabacon = Bocchoris = Nechus.	Agis	Sôas	Glaucus	Phialus	Agelas I.	Assyrian Empire begun about this Time.
16 Jotham	Sabacon reigned very long, settled the Æthiopian Empire over Egypt, which continued till Asser-haddon conquered them.	Echestratus	Euripon	Isthmius	Simus	Prinnis	Pul or Belus, 1st Conqueror.
17 Ahaz		Labotus	Prytanes	Dotidas	Pompus	Bacchis	Tiglath-Pilefar = Nabonassar. The Nabonassaren Æra begun in this Reign.
18 Hezekiah	Sethon. He fought with Sennacherib.	Doryagus	Eunomus	Sybotas	Ægenita	Agelas II.	Shalmonasser
19 Manasseh	Tirhakah conquered by Asser-haddon. The Æthiopians expelled Egypt by him.	Agefilaus	Polydectes Lycurgus	Phyntas	Polymestor = Briacas	Eudemus	Sennacherib
20 Amon	12 Kings reigned jointly. When they shook off the Assyrian Yoke after Asser-haddon's Death.	Archelaus	Charilaus	Androcles 1st Messenian War.	Æchmis	Aristodemus	Asser-haddon. A great Conqueror. Added Babylon to Assyria.
21 Josiah	Pfameticus. Built the last Portico of Vulcan's Temple.	Teleclus	Nicander	EUPHAES	Aristocrates I.	Telestes. Last K.	Saosduchinus
22 Jehoiakim	Nechus. A great Prince. Sent Ships round Africa.	Alcamen	Theopompus	ARISTODEMUS	Hicetas	Prytanes Bacchidum. An Aristocracy of the Royal Family of the Bacchidae.	Chinialdon. Perhaps Sarac was his Successor, from whom
23 Zedekiah	Pfammis.	Polydorus	Son died before his Father.	ARISTOMENES	Aristocrates II. He betrayed Messenians.	Sarac = Nabopolassar revolted.	Asiyages
24 Jeconiah survived Nebuchadnezzar.	Apries or Hophra. Conquered by Nebuchadnezzar. It is not clear whether he was the last of the Royal Line of Judah, or whether he had Posterity.	Euricrates I.	Zeuxidamas	Gorgus. He led the Messenian Colony into Sicily and founded Messene, by the Reliques of this brave People, the noblest Patriots in History.	2d Messenian War.	Amyite + Nebuchadnezzar = Evilmerodach Nergalaffur Belsazzar. The Line of Genealogy is here obscure, but if he was Nebuchadnezzar's Son, the Course of Generations fails here.	Cyxares = Mandane + Cambyfes the Persian. Darius Medus Cyrus Cambyfes Darius Hyftaspis. Xerxes.



TABLE I. A GENEALOGICAL TABLE of the parallel Successions and Descents in most of the Sovereign Families of Greece, compared with Israel and Egypt. From the First History of Greece, to the Return of the Heraclidae.

ISRAEL.	EGYPT.	SPARTA and LACEDÆMONIA.	ARGOS. MYCENÆ.	ARCADIA. HÆMONIA.	MESSENIA.	ATTICA.	ELEUSINIA.	ARGOS.	SICYONIA.	ELIS.	ÆTOLIA. BÆOTIA.	TROY.	CRETE.	THESSALIA.	CORINTH.				
1. <b>Abraham</b>	Mesara. The Kings of Egypt uncertain in their Succession to Solomon's Time.	Lelex	Aras	1st Line from Acrisius, Son of Abas.	Pelagus	1. <b>Ægeus</b> = Ogyges, Natives.	Inachus	1st Line of Inachus.											
2. <b>Isaac</b>	Misphragmuthosis.	Eurotas	Taygetus	Lycan = Hæmon	Deucalion	2. <b>CECROPS</b>	Eleusis	Phoroneus =	Ægialeus, childless.	Deucalion					Deucalion				
3. <b>Saul</b>	Tethmosis	Atas	+	Abas	Calisto	4. <b>Amphycton</b>	3. <b>Cranæus</b>	Niobe =	Io =	Europe. Expelled by Telchines. He by	Protogenia + Æthlius				Heleneus				
4. <b>DAVID</b>	Amosis	ACRISIUS +	EURYDICE =	AMYCLAS =	PRÆTUS = Acrisius	ARCAS	ÆOLUS = Xuthus	Three successive Expulsions. So that near	5. <b>ERECHTHEUS</b>	ARGUS	APIS.	No Sons that succeeded him.	ENDYMION	Harmonia =	Jafus and Dardanus	Phoenix	Æolus	Æolus	
5. <b>Solomon</b>	Amenemes, or Ammon. Whom his Son Sifac first deified by the Name of Jupiter Ammon.	Danac	Argalus	Megapenthes	Elatas = Aphidas	Salmonæus	Xuthus + Creusa =	6. <b>Pandion = Metion</b>	Pyranthus	Lybia	Lamedon. He of unknown Descent, but gave his Daughter to	Eurycydas	Ætolus	Polydorus left his Son a Minor.	Erichthonius	Europa	Pisidices + Myrmidon	Sisyphus	
6. <b>Rehoboam</b>	SESOSTRIS or Sefac, or Bacchus. First Emperor. The Author of Hero Gods. The Builder or Enlarger of Thebes.	PERSEUS	Cynortes	Anaxagoras. In this Reign the Argive Women had Madneis cured by Melampus.	Stymphalus	Aleus	Tyro + Neptune	7. <b>Ægeus</b>	Sicyon	PERSEUS	Belus	Sicyon of Attica who had War with Archander.	Eleus I.	Pleuron	Labdacus left Læus a Minor.	Tros	MINOS	Actor + Ægina	Ornytion = Glancus
7. <b>Abijah</b>	Orus. Last of the Gods. After Sefac's Death, was the War of the Gods in Egypt.	Aleus = Gorgophone + Oebalus	Electer	Agamedes	Lycurgus	Pelias	Neleus	8. <b>THESEUS.</b> He was a great Hero.	Schenelus	Egypt.	Polybus = Lyfanassa	Augas	Parthaon	Laius	Ilus	Androgeus	Æacus	Thos	Bellerophon
8. <b>Afa</b>	Zerah the Æthiopian, contended against Orus in those Wars, was slain by Afa.	Amphytrion	Tyndarus	Iphis	Cercyones	Anceus an Argonaut.	Nestor = Periclimenes	9. <b>Hippolytus</b>	Eurytheus	Anyone	Adrastus. In the Theban War.	Agathenes	Æneus	Oedipus	Laomedon	Deucalion	Peleus	Demophon	Laodamia
9. <b>Josaphat</b>	Menes or Memnon, or Amenophis. First Emperor after the Gods. Builds Memphis.	HERCULES	Castor = Pollux	Evadne + Capaneus	Alope + Neptune	Agapenor, at Trojan War.	Thrasimedes	Penthius	10. <b>Demophon</b>	Atræus	Nauplius	Deipyle + Tydeus	Polyxenus	Gorge + Adremon	Priamus	Idomeneus at Troy.	Achilles	Propadas	Sarpedon at Troy.
10. <b>Jehoram</b>	Rameffes. Very rich. Builds 1st Portico of Vulcan's Temple, and the great Obelisk.	Hyllus	Helena	Sthenelus at Troy.	Hippotheus	Syllus	Borus	11. <b>Oxyntes</b>	Agamemnon	Palamedes	Diamedes	Amphimachus	Tboas at Troy.	Tberfander at Troy.	HECTOR	at Troy.	Pyrrhus	Dorydas	
11. <b>Ahaziah</b>	Mæris. Makes the famous Lake. 2d Portico. Makes Memphis the Capital.	Cleodæus	Hermione	Chilaribes, died childless.	Epytus	Alcmæon	Andropompus	12. <b>Aphidas</b>	Orestes				Hæmon	Tifamæus				Hyanthidas	
12. <b>Athaliah</b>	Chæops. Built the great Pyramid.	Aristomachus	Tifamæus	Cypselus	MELANTHUS. The Messenian accepted the Challenge of Xanthus the Theban, and slaying him, was chosen King of Athens.	Thymætes	He refused Xanthus's Challenge, and Melanthus was chosen King of Athens.	13. <b>Tifamæus.</b> In his old Age Heraclides return to Peloponnesus. Four Sons who divided Achaia among them, expelling the Ionians. This after Return.	Eleus II.	Oxylus	K. of Elis at Return.	Antefion							Alætes the Heraclid.
13. <b>Josiah</b>	Cephrenes. Builds 2d Pyramid.	ARISTODEMUS. Some say slain before the Return. His Sons Minors under Theras.	CRESPHONTES	Oleas = Daughter + Cresphontes								Praxonidas	THERAS. Tutor to the Minor Twin Sons of Aristodemus.						
	Mycerinus = Nitocris. 3d Pyramid.											He restored Olympiads about two or three Generations after Return.	Oiolycus						

N. B. 1. Samuel and Saul were near Contemporary Governments.

2. Sefac = Rehoboam is the most clear first Synchronism, from which the Rest are gathered both upward and downward.

4. Many of the Herculean Line are in Female Descents, which may well lengthen the Line perhaps One Generation or Two.

3. I have distinguished all the Contemporaries of Cadmus with the Names in Capitals, as he brought Letters into Greece, and so must begin History.

5. I have marked the Names of the chief Men in the Return with Capitals.



CRITICAL and CHRONOLOGICAL  
HISTORY  
OF  
KNOWLEDGE, &c.

C H A P. I.

*On HISTORY in General.*

**H**AVING laid down the general Design of this Work in the Introduction, I now go on to consider the Nature, Rise and Progress of History, from its most simple Beginning to its greatest Improvement.

I proceed upon this Supposition, That there would always be some History among Mankind; according to the Materials which they had for it, and their Conveniencies which they enjoyed for conveying it to any Distance, either of Place or Time. But, as I would take as little as possible for granted, in this Enquiry into Original Knowledge; nor assert any Thing without the best Evidence the Subject is capable of, I hope I shall be excused, if I proceed in a very simple Way, and prove some Things, which may not seem at the first View to require any Proof.

I. I shall



- I. I shall consider the Nature of History; and shew, that they must have had Materials, or something to communicate, from the Beginning.
- II. I shall enquire into the Original of Language; and shew, that they *could* impart their Thoughts to each other from the earliest Times.
- III. I shall enquire into the general Dispositions of Mankind; and shew, that they *would* impart and communicate their Sentiments and Observations mutually to each other.

## SECTION I.

## On the Nature of HISTORY.

I SHALL consider the Nature of *History*; and shew, that they must have had Materials, or something to communicate, from the Beginning.

HISTORY, in the most simple Notion of it, is, a Relation of Affairs and Transactions to others, which they, who hear the Relation, knew not before; and which those, who make the Relation, were competently acquainted with. According to this Description, *History* may be conversant not only about Actions and Events, but also about Notions and Opinions: One may tell another his own Notions, and the Reasons of his entertaining them, and so there may arise an History of Opinion, or Articles of Faith: And, if these Opinions were inferred from Facts, it will be an *Historical Faith*.

All genuine History properly proceeds from the original Agents, or *Eye-witnesses*, who can, of their own Knowledge, testify those Things which they report. So that, at whatever Distance we are from the Scene and Time of Action, whether one Year or Mile, or a thousand; yet the Story is always supposed to ascend and travel from those who relate it *last*, to those who were Eye-witnesses, or had a perfect Knowledge of it at *first*; otherwise it can pass for nothing more than Fable, or Conjecture. We in this Age embrace *antient* and *modern* History on the *same* Principle, *viz.* a Perswasion that those, who were Eye-witnesses of the several Events, related them to others of their own Knowledge; by whom they were transmitted to the next Succession of Witnesses, and so on, till they reach us. We believe the Accounts of the Triumphs of antient or modern Conquerors, or Tyrants, on the same Foundation: As that *Alexander* conquered the *Persian* Empire, or *Caesar* enslaved his own Country: Or that the Patriot House of *Nassau* were the glorious Instruments of establishing the Liberties of *Holland*: Or that the heroic *Duke of Marlborough* broke the Chains of *Europe*, by so many celebrated Victories over the Armies of *France*. We saw none of these memorable Events, but Eye-witnesses, who were present at them, related them as they saw them. Our *Marlborough*, tho' with a Modesty as signal as his heroic Courage, sent an Account of Victories, and the *French* Generals sent an Account of Defeats: These were set down in written Histories and Records, and are hereby preserved to this Day. It was in the same Manner that *Cain* and *Abel*,



*Abel*, and *Seth*, and all, who were instructed by our first Parents, were induced to believe that Man was once happy in Paradise: That he sinned, and was expelled. They were informed of these Facts by *Adam* and *Eve*, who could report them all of their own Knowledge.

We know, from the Writings of *Moses*, that our first Parents had these important Materials of History to report to their Posterity: And we might conclude, that they must have had some Materials of *History*, something to relate, from the very Nature of Man: The Dignity of his Nature must make him a Subject of *God's* special Providence; his natural Activity would engage him in many Undertakings; his intellectual Capacities would enable him to make Observations: And all these would jointly furnish him with Materials for an *History* of what he did, and what befel him.

## SECT. II.

### *On the Original of Language.*

I SHALL next enquire into the Origin of Language; and shew, that they could impart their Thoughts and Observations to each other, from the earliest Times: If so, there must have been early *History*, whether it ever came down to us, or not.

In order to clear this Point, I shall make use of Arguments, which singly cannot well be denied; and endeavour, by all of them taken together, to make out the Proposition, that they had Language very early.

1. The Use of Language would be immediately *necessary* for their tolerable Accommodation in Society; what is necessary for us now, must have been so for them; and it is plain, we can have very little mutual Satisfaction without Conversation. Our first Parents had the Powers of Intellect to contemplate the Beauties of external Nature, and to make Observations upon them: "They had Joys arising from a Consciousness of their own Existence, and from a View of the happy Circumstances in which they found themselves situated. This would make it highly fit and desirable, that they should be immediately capable of expressing to each other, the Sense they had of their great Happiness\*. If these inward Pleasures could only have been intimated by dumb Signs, the Air of the Countenance, the Motion of the Hand or Eye, they could but have administered little mutual Benefit or Delight.

2. It seems highly improbable, if not impossible, that our first Parents should speedily form a Language that could be sufficient for their rational Intercourse and mutual Converse. "Tho' they had Organs suited for Speech, yet repeated Effays, and long Experience must be requisite, to enable them intelligibly and clearly to convey to one another in Words, proper Notices of the Thoughts,  
B " that

\* Dr. Hunt's Essay, p. 16.



“that sprung up in the Minds of each of them,” as the very learned Dr. Hunt observes\*.

We see a Pattern of this Difficulty in the learning all new Languages: Tho’ we have our Minds stored with Ideas, and have no Occasion to spend Time in inventing new Words, those being taught us by the Master; yet it requires considerable Time, as well as Pains, to remember them, so as to attain a Readiness in speaking any new Tongue. Our first Parents, therefore, who had Words to invent, as well as remember, could but make a very slow Progress in the Art of Speaking.

3. God is so gracious a Being, and did so bountifully provide for their Happiness in all other Respects, that we may conclude, in Parity of Reason, that he would impart to them the Gift of Language, nearly with their first Existence. It was so *necessary* for them to have it, and so *difficult* to invent it, that it appears altogether worthy of the divine Benignity to bestow it upon them instantaneously. An ingenious and elegant Writer remarks, “That as God made Man a sociable Creature, so when he had made him such, that he with-held nothing from him, that was in any ways necessary to his Well-being in Society, is a clear Consequence from the Wisdom and Goodness of God: And, if he with-held nothing any way necessary to his Well-being, much less would he with-hold from him that which is the Instrument of the greatest Happiness a reasonable Creature is capable of, in this World †.” We know that this extraordinary and instantaneous Manner of imparting Language is easy to the Almighty, from the eminent Sample and Instance thereof, in the miraculous Gift of Tongues to the Apostles, and others of the first Ministers of the Christian Church: God at that Time, not only communicated to them Sentiments, but *Words* by which to express them, in many different national Languages, to which they were Strangers before ‡. This Christian Miracle was wrought when there was a great Expediency in it, for the quicker Propagation of Christianity, when the Eye-witnesses of the Evidences were yet alive; and there was an equal Expediency in it in the Case of our first Parents, to fix in both their Minds a Sense of the Authority of the divine Law, and the *Matter* of it, which was probably imparted only to *Adam*.

4. We cannot reasonably suspect that the all-wise and gracious Creator would leave so noble a Part of his Work as Mankind, in so imperfect and unfinished a State, as he must have been, without *Speech*. God declares that it was not good for the Man to be alone; and if so, neither was it good for him to have such a Companion, to whom he could not readily communicate his Thoughts. He was not alone before; but yet he had no meet Help, among all these Creatures about him, because there were none who could mutually share in rational Correspondence. All the *Brute* Creation had their natural Language, adapted to their several Organs, and understood by Instinct from the Beginning. The Herds and Flocks

\* Dr. Hunt's *Essay*, p. 16.

† *Revel. Examined*, Vol. I. p. 34.

‡ *Acts* ii. 6, 7.



Flocks, and Beasts of Prey, have the same natural Sounds, according to their Species, in all Countries. They express their Grievs and Joys, their Transports, Resentments, and Love, in everlastingly intelligible Notes and Sounds, for the Use of those which are the natural Parties in their several Passions: And can we think, that Man, who was more especially made for Society, should be the last to share in the Privileges of it?

We may then, on the whole, conclude, with great Probability, that Language was very near coeval with Thinking, by the Power and Will of God. The first Pair were taught Language by *Revelation*, whereby they could entertain each other in Conversation, on all the Proceedings of Providence towards them, and their Behaviour towards God.

### S E C T. III.

#### *General Dispositions to communicate.*

**I** SHALL enquire into the general Dispositions of Mankind, and shew that they would communicate their Observations mutually to each other.

If our Nature can be supposed to have been nearly the same in all Ages, and to have had similar Passions, Affections, and Appetites, then we may make probable Conjectures, how they would have acted in the most distant Times, in any given Circumstances. The general Dispositions of Mankind may be collected by Experience and Observation in any one Age, particularly by our own, and so may be inferred by Analogy, concerning all other Ages. What we feel in ourselves, and observe in others, may be allowed to be a Standard, by which to judge, as to the general Dispositions of Human Nature. Particular Exceptions can be no Prejudice to the Argument: For, tho' some Persons may have an unsociable Temper, a fullen, impenetrable Secrecy and Silence, they are but few; it is not the Temper of Mankind.

There is a general Curiosity to be informed concerning the Affairs of *others*, and a Propensity to communicate the Knowledge of our *own*, of which we scarce ever meet with any Person wholly destitute, which will, in all Ages, make Men *Historians*. This Curiosity, indeed, varies much, according to our Rank and Taste: For Princes and Peasants have very different Objects of it. Nevertheless, it is a similar Disposition in all Men, and must therefore proceed from some common Principles in our Nature.

I. This mutual Communicativeness may be ascribed to a *social* Temper, which reigns thro' all Mankind, and doubtless, thro' the whole rational Creation, and wondrously connects all Systems of Being, according to their several Natures and Tastes: This cements the Choirs of Angels in their celestial Unions, as well as Men in theirs. We feel that we are not made for Solitude, nor could we be happy in the most pleasant, fruitful *Void* in all Nature, where there were no other Inhabitants: We want the Countenance of our Friend to refresh us; we



want a Witness of our Joys, to give them a Poignancy by his Gratuations; a Partner in them, one to sympathize with us in every Grief, as well as Joy, to alleviate the one, and to augment the other.

This Sentiment is nobly express'd by our great cotemporary Poet \*.

" There's not a Blessing Individuals find,  
 " But some Way leans and hearkens to its Kind.  
 " No Bandit fierce, no Tyrant mad with Pride,  
 " No cavern'd Hermit, rest self-satisfy'd.  
 " Who most to shun or hate Mankind pretend,  
 " Seek an Admirer, or would fix a Friend.  
 " Abstract what others feel, what others think,  
 " All Pleasures sicken, and all Glories sink.  
 " Each has his Share, and who wou'd more obtain  
 " Shall find, the Pleasure pays not half the Pain."

This mutual Gravitation towards each other in the moral World, has something analogous to it in the whole System of Nature. The inferior Animal World are all in Unions of Instinct, and in some Sense are all gregarious. Tho' there are Enmities, as well as Affections, Repulsions, as well as Attractions, since some are a natural Prey to others; yet where Instinct doth not warn them of Danger, it leads them to this Union universally.

Even Matter has its mechanic Union and *Friendship*, if the Phrase may be allowed. Every Particle gravitates to that to which it is to be united, by the Will of God; every Mass has its Magnetism, which, with proper Motions and Distances, constitute one orderly whole, for ever kept together by these invisible Bands, as is finely described by the same sublime Writer. †

" View thy own World; behold the Chain of Love  
 " Combining all below, and all above.  
 " See plastic Nature working to this End,  
 " The single Atoms each to other tend;  
 " Attract, attracted to, the next in Place  
 " Form'd, and impell'd, its Neighbour to embrace.  
 " See Matter next with various Life endu'd  
 " Press to one Center still, the general Good."

2. Inward *Benevolence*, that heavenly Instinct infused by the all-bountiful Father of Love and Harmony into the Human Heart, draws us to mutual Communicativeness. Hereby we are led mutually to delight in each other's Well-being, and excited to endeavour the promoting of it, by communicating any Thing that would be like to contribute thereto.

3. We

\* *Essay on Man*. Ep. 4. v. 37.

† *Ibid*. Ep. 3. v. 7.



3. We have all of us a Principle of *Self-love*, which irresistibly impells us to desire our own Happiness, and to make use of all Means, whereby it may be advanced\*. And as we find ourselves weak; and, in some Instance or other, always standing in need of the Friendship and Services of others; and, as others also stand in like need of us; this mutual *Necessity* will stir all Men up to a mutual Communicativeness; that we may give, or receive, the Aid and Advice, which we may severally have Occasion for.

4. *Natural Affection* for our nearest Relations, must be assigned as another great Source of mutual Communicativeness, among all these who are in such Relations. The interesting and tender Affections in the same Family, as betwixt Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Brothers and Sisters, will cogently impel them to this mutual Intercourse. The Tenderneſs implanted in a Parent's Heart, towards his beloved Offspring, operates with an anxious Vigilance to quicken *him* to impart all the Knowledge which he apprehends to be any way useful to *them*, and will heighten his *inquisitive* Solicitude about their Affairs. All the Events which have befallen himself, all the Rocks and Precipices from which he has been in Danger, he will admonish them about. His own virtuous Actions he will relate for their Imitation; and even his Lapses, he will prudently apprise them of, for their Caution. The natural Affections, at least in all good Parents, will inspire this Care, to impart faithfully this domestic Knowledge, both in the hortatory, and monitory Way.

These undeniable Principles of our Nature will clear up one principal Point; That there *would* be the Knowledge of Religion, in the first Families of Mankind, as far as they had Materials. And this is as far as I am obliged to carry it, for the Support of my general Design.

5. I may however, superadd, the Consideration of some other common Affections of our Nature, which would operate to make all Men Historians, or dispose them to relate to others what they knew.

When Mankind multiplied, and enlarged to national Distinctions, an Union of all these Affections would beget Love of Country, and public Spirit. This would naturally excite Men to communicate whatever Observations they had made, which might contribute to the Glory, Felicity and Strength of their Country. A generous Monarch would, from this Principle, instruct his Royal Heir, in all the noble Arts of Government; how he may observe the greatest Regal Character of *Father of his People*. The brave Admiral, General or Statesman, will from this true, heroic Patriotism, impart all their Observations and Directions, how to make A People great, and keep them so. How to keep out enervating Luxury, how to curb the dangerous Efforts of private Avarice and Ambition, or to prevent or cure the debasing Contagion of Venality and Corruption. From hence will arise History of a more public Kind; and it appears, on the whole of what has been hitherto urged, that this Communica-

\* Perizon. Origin. Babylon. pag. 227. *Est enim Homo ab Naturâ suâ alienæ Opis, ut indigens ita expetens, atque adeo ejusdem Naturæ primævo Instinctu, mutuam Societatem et convivium quærit.*



municativeness may be in great Part accounted for, from our virtuous and commendable Dispositions.

6. There is besides an ardent Passion for *Fame*, almost universal, which further accounts both for Communicativeness and Inquisitiveness.

Our Desire of Fame is various according to our different Talents and Taste.

“ The very best will variously incline,

“ And what rewards your Virtue, punish mine.

There is perhaps but one Branch of Fame to which all aspire, that of being thought *an honest Man*: And I believe this is so universal, that were it not for the insuperable Force of some other particular Passion, Ambition, Avarice, or Lust; the Fear of Infamy would restrain any Man from being a Villain. But though, in other Respects, our Taste is so various; yet all will act, according to their particular Turn and Rank, in Pursuit of a Fame of their own Kind. The heroic Admiral, or General, aims at Glory, in the high Places of the Ocean, or the Field. The gallant Youth will mount the Breach of a besieged Fortrefs, or pass through the Tempest of engaging Fleets, in the Fury of Action; he will advance, fearless of the Mine beneath him, or the Artillery around him, with little Prospect of Reward, but his Inheritance of *Fame*. So again the great Orator pursueth the Glory of Eloquence in Courts and Senates, and repines not at wearisome Days, and many sleepless Nights, to be what *Demosthenes* or *Tully* once were.

Nor is this Love of Fame confined to these more showy and conspicuous Characters. The obscure Philosopher and sedentary Student will not decline laborious, midnight Watchings, to obtain some Fame for Learning and Genius, and the Passion dilates thro' all the Ranks of Mankind. The great Monarch builds a City or Palace, in Ostentation of his own Grandeur and Magnificence. *Is not this great Babylon which I have built?* &c. But the Architect hopes to survive, in the Design and Proportion of the Structure, and to have his own Fame propt up by the swelling Column, to which he as it were leans, and fastens it for its Preservation.

I am, indeed, far from excluding from the virtuous Heart, the nobler Motives of preserving their Country, discharging their Trust, or being useful; only it may be feared, that these might operate more weakly, were it not for this Passion for Fame, which incorporates with all the other good Principles of Action; and superadds its own Force to them. From this common Passion, the natural Growth of the Human Heart, will proceed an History of both Actions, Sciences and Arts; for if Men desire Fame, they will communicate those Things which they think deserve it.

I have hitherto only considered our Desire of Fame, as a Motive to *communicate* our own Affairs. But there is also a boundless Curiosity as to the Affairs of *others*, which will be another Source of History.

This



This *Inquisitiveness* may be quickened by different Dispositions, the benevolent, or the contrary. Some desire to know the Affairs of others, out of *Good-will*, to do them all due Honour for their laudable Qualities; others out of *Ill-will*, to get Occasions of Defamation and Reproach. From this Situation of Things in the World, there would naturally spring two Sorts of cotemporary History. Love of Fame will urge us to relate *our own* Story, and Envy or Emulation will impell us to tell the Story of *others*; and these perhaps may be the Sources of false History either Way. Vanity and *Self-love* will induce a Man to describe his own laudable Actions larger than the Life, and to extenuate the more exceptionable Parts. Envy and *Emulation* will induce him to magnify and extenuate, in the opposite Way. He will be apt to give such a sparing Account of the Virtues of his Rival, and such a copious and spiteful Detail of his Lapses and Failings; that, tho' there are all the principal Features in both, yet the Beauties, in the one, are so magnified, and the Deformities lessened; and in the other, the Deformities are so heightened, and the Beauties diminished, that the Draught would seem to design different Persons.

Again, almost every Action is capable of having such a perverse or friendly Turn given to it, from Men's inward Views and Intentions, which cannot be discerned by others; that tho' one relates the Actions of others materially right; yet, by this Variety of Turn, even fair Virtue may be transformed into Vice. Thus, in relating the same War, with near the same Event; so that the same General shall be owned to be Conqueror in both the Narratives; yet one Historian shall describe a generous, brave Hero; the other, a designing, avaricious, cruel Plunderer. And with Regard to the same great Man, at the Head of National Councils; one Historian shall set him forth as a sagacious, penetrating Patriot, Statesman; another, a cunning, subtil, selfish Traitor. Both of them shall set down the Events under his Administration, pretty near the same; but *Expedition* shall by one Historian be called Courage and Vigour; by the other, Heat and Rashness. *Caution* shall with one, pass for Foresight, Caution and Prudence; with the other, for Timidity, Indolence, and Want of Spirit.

But, as we have only *sacred* History, from which to extract our Knowledge of the first Ages; a further Examination of the Causes of Falseness in History, will be here unnecessary. And I shall proceed upon this Point, as now made out, that there would necessarily be, agreeable to the Nature of Mankind, some History of past Events, circulating among them, from the most early Times.



## C H A P. III.

*On Original Religious Knowledge.*

**H**A V I N G proved that there must have been some History among Mankind from the Beginning ; I now proceed to enquire, what Religious Knowledge they could have in the first Ages?

Whatever Methods of recording past Affairs Mankind has, thro' successive Ages, made use of, *Oral Tradition* must have been the first Mean of Intelligence ; as between *Adam* and *Eve*, and their Children. And what the first Teachers had to impart we must now consider.

For illustrating this Point of Primitive, *Religious Knowledge*, I shall lay down these two Positions.

I. All Mankind descended from two Parents.

2. That there were many Things remarkable in their original Condition ; which furnished Materials for *History*, and for their subsequent Observations upon it.

We are, indeed, solely indebted to the great *Hebrew* Antiquary, *Moses*, for the Knowledge of these Things. But we may readily admit them upon his Authority ; since there is nothing incredible in the Things themselves, since no authentic antient Author contradicts him, and his Authority is confirmed by Christ and his Apostles.

*Moses* is very short in his Account of the Opinions of the *Antediluvians* ; but pretty copious in relating many remarkable Events, to which our first Parents were Eye-witnesses, or of which they had a perfect Intelligence. I shall therefore attempt to deduce their Religious Knowledge from thence.

There are these two principal Sources, from which they might draw their Knowledge of *Religion*.

I. The important Facts, which our first Parents saw, and the Revelations which were made to them.

II. Their own Reasoning upon both these.

These were the luminous Spring of all those noble Articles of *Antediluvian Faith*, which shone with so much Lustre and Energy in the Preaching, and the Life of *Noah*, who lived to the End of the first World.



## S E C T. I.

*On the Facts, from which Religious Knowledge was, or might have been derived.*

I SHALL state the important *Facts*, which our first Parents saw, and the *Revelations*, which were made to them. And as all Mankind descended from them, we must find out the Knowledge they had, as the Basis of the future Edifice of *Religion*, among their Descendants from hence.

1. The first observable Fact was this, our first Parents were created in a State of *Maturity*, as to their Powers and Faculties both of Body and Mind. And this they could relate to their Children of their own Knowledge.

They did not find themselves, on their first awaking into Consciousness, in a weak, helpless State, like their Children in Infancy; unable to move from Place to Place, needing the Breast, or other necessary Food, to be administered by others; but in full Vigour and Activity of Body, and in a certain Perfection and *action* of all their Organs. Again, they found themselves capable of exerting the Faculty of Thinking, and of reflecting on all they saw without, or felt within, in a rational Way. That they had this perfect Use of Reason instantaneously, is plain, because they were capable of understanding a Law, on the very Day of their Creation.

The whole Creation was certainly finished on the sixth Day, because the Seventh was a solemn Day of sacred Rest, appointed to be observed by *Man*, in Commemoration of God's resting from Creation-work; or ceasing to exert any further Power therein. *Eve* was therefore created on the sixth Day, and they were both capable of attending to the Institution of the Sabbath, on the Seventh. This instantaneous Perfection of their Faculties both of Body and Mind, they could relate of their own Knowledge to their Children, in the Course of their Education.

Again, the World about them was completely finished in exact Beauty, Harmony and Order, adapted to every necessary and noble End. The magnificent Arches of the Sky were raised, as a glorious Canopy, adorned with all the Luminaries of Heaven above them; the solid Earth was spread forth beneath them, in a flowery, verdant Plain, like a delightful Carpet. The Texture of the expanded Air was finished, for transmitting Light, propagating Sound, sustaining Vapour, and feeding our vital Breath. All the Tribes of the inferior Animals of the terrestrial Kind, attended obsequiously around him; and at least all those which were common in that Climate, and which \* they might have Occasion to converse about, were brought to *Adam*, to receive their Names from him; probably, to instruct him further in the Nature of their Subjection to him, and in Token of his Supremacy over them.

C

Finally;

\* Vid. *Clerc. in loc.*



Finally; before the sixth Day, as we said was finished, *Eve* was created, and brought to *Adam*. He was still alone in the midst of so lovely a World. He met with no suitable Associate, nothing Kindred to himself, to which he found any Instinct of Union, till *Eve* was brought to him. But this last Work completed the Creation. Here was the Commencement of their Happiness in their social State, and nuptial Union. Here Human Nature dates its Origin, and could determinately fix the *Æra* of its Birth.

2. A second memorable Event was this, It was *revealed* to our first Parents, that one God created the Universe. There are several Considerations, which may induce us to believe that the Knowledge of God was first imparted by *Revelation*, or some extraordinary Conveyance.

1. The Creation was an Event, which had passed before their own Existence, and therefore our first Parents could have no speedy Knowledge of it, without Information from some other Being. In many Things, *Adam* was an *Eye-witness*, and could relate of his own Knowledge; and Tradition might come regularly down from him, as such. But as to the *Creation*, which was over *before* his own Being in the World, he could give no more Account of it, without extraordinary Information, than *Moses* could. It cannot therefore be justly alledged, that *Moses* writ the History of it, from *Tradition* from any *Eye-witnesses*; for who could relate the first Account of this Work? *Adam*, indeed, could tell, that he saw this regular World from the Beginning; but the Manner, in which it was created, the Order, Progress and Succession of each Part of the Work, it is manifestly impossible he could ever know, without some Intimation from another. Whatever human Reason might have discovered, in Length of Time, by arguing from the *Data* in the visible Creation, as to the Unity and Perfections of God; yet they seem to have required, or stood in need of, this Knowledge *sooner*, than they could have, *in this Way*, found it out. According to *Moses's* History, they had several Transactions, in which they were immediately concerned, which could not be well managed without this Knowledge of God and his Perfections, and, as a judicious Author notes, "The settling of this Point, in its proper Clearness and Compass, required longer Discussion than appears congruous to their Circumstances".

2. It seems highly probable, from *Moses's* Account, that God did not leave our first Parents to the slow Progress they might have made, in the Knowledge of God, by the unassisted Use of their own Faculties; because there were several *Grants* of Privileges made to them, as soon as they were created. Such as these, a Title to make use of all the Fruits of *Paradise*, except one; a Dominion over the inferior Creatures; and a peculiar, nuptial Property in each other. Now such Grants implied a Sovereign Proprietor and Lord, who had a Power and Authority to make these Grants. And, therefore, God immediately communicated the Knowledge of himself, by *Revelation*, or the Agency of some ministerial Spirit, appointed to this Office.

3. There

\* Dr. Hunt's Essay, pag. 15.



3. There was a visible, glorious Appearance, called afterwards *the Presence of God*, probably attended with ministering Angels, which was a Kind of sensible Evidence of the Being of a God. That there was such an Appearance, as Doctor *Hunt* observes, seems evidently to be implied, from many Expressions of *Moses*. It is twice said, that the Lord God put *Adam* into the Garden He had planted for him; that the Lord God brought to *Adam* all the Cattle to receive Names from him; that God brought *Eve* to him. If there was not such an Appearance, it doth not seem easy to conceive, how *Adam*, a conscious Being, clothed with Body, could be said to be put by the Lord God into Paradise, nor how *Eve*, after her Formation, could be said to be brought by the Lord God to *Adam*, nor how the Cattle could be said to have been led up by the Lord God to *Adam* to receive their Names.\*

This *Shechinah*, or glorious Appearance, was probably frequently seen; and it would naturally strike them with Reverence for an higher Being than themselves. They might innocently desire to know the Author of their own Being, and the whole Frame of Things, and how they themselves and the World about them was made. And, from our Idea of God, we cannot but suppose Him ready to favour them with the Knowledge of these important and necessary Things†. But it seems probable that all the Notices, which our first Parents had of the Divine Nature, and God's Holy Will, were imparted by Words, or audible Messages, and visible Messengers, rather than inward Suggestions; because, in their Circumstances, they would be more striking.

4. It seems necessary that they should have been instructed in the Knowledge of the Being of a God, to introduce the Exercise of Divine Authority in giving the Law. It would appear something abrupt to enjoin a Law, before the Law-giver was made known. Now the Law of *the forbidden Fruit* was given, as soon as they were in *Paradise*; therefore the Account of the *Creation* was given them very soon; that they might know the Law-giver, before the Law.

I should think that all this Knowledge was imparted on the *sixth Day*; and so our first Parents were qualified to solemnize the *Sabbath-day*, in the Exercises of sublime and rational Piety, like the Holy Angels, who had been, perhaps, Spectators of the amazing Work. And what exquisite Satisfaction must our great Ancestor receive from this instructive Lesson on these high Subjects,—the Creation of the World, and the Perfections of the Creator! How delightfully would he hear the Mysteries of Nature's Birth, and the Glories of the God of Nature, revealed or imparted to him, among his first Thoughts!

3. The third memorable Fact was this, That our first Parents were placed in a State of great Felicity, in *Paradise*. This *Moses* expressly asserts. This they could relate punctually to their Children, of their own Knowledge; in such a copious Manner, that it must necessarily make great Impressions.

They could dilate on all the delightful Scene, the Abundance of their Blessings, and Exemption from Sorrows. It was a State of copious Plenty and exquisite

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\* Dr. *Hunt's Essay*, pag. 16.† *Idem*.



exquisite Pleasure, where every Sense was saluted with the most elegant and poignant Entertainment. There were no toilsome Cares and Labours necessary for tilling the fruitful Ground, or gathering what bounteous Nature provided so profusely for them. Tho' they had Work, it was a constant Series of Pleasure, in passing from one fragrant Grove, and flowery Walk to another. And they were by heavenly Grant, entitled to every delicious Fruit and aromatic Plant, for their constant and delicate Repast. Yet these were not half the Joys of *Paradise*. All was Innocence within, which must open a new Scene, of distinct Pleasures, rational and religious, as much more noble than the other, as the Soul is nobler than the Body.

Of these unexperienced Joys, the Joys of perfect Innocence, we, who have never felt them, can speak but inaccurately: But they could describe them with Propriety. We have tasted delicious Fruits, and seen beautiful Flowers, and been refreshed with fragrant Shrubs: We have seen the Grandeur of a Forest, the Beauty of a Grove, the Agreeableness of a Visto or a Plain; and therefore may conceive more adequately of the sensitive Joys of *Paradise*. But who can conceive of the Spiritual Felicity of their State? Who can conceive of the Calm and Tranquillity which reigned thro' all the serene Region of their guiltless Breast; or the heavenly Transports with which their Hearts must overflow, in the constant Sense of the Divine Favour and Approbation? No conscious Shame stained their Cheek, no disquieting Fear troubled their Countenance, no inward Sorrow cast down their Spirit; they knew no Evil, but they must have had an exquisite and delightful Knowledge of Good.

4. The *Sabbath* was consecrated for a religious Use. *The Historian* observes that the whole Creation was finished, and God ceased from his Work on the *sixth* Day; and that He blessed and sanctified the *seventh* Day, in Commemoration of his resting from, or leaving off Creation-work.

For clearing this Point to the best of my Ability, I note

1. That God declared to our FIRST PARENTS, the Separation or Sanctity of the *Sabbath-Day*. He separated it, or set it apart, to be observed by THEM, in religious Commemoration of God's Work of Creation, which He finished in six Days. I therefore conclude, That He had made known to them the History of the Course and Progress of the Creation in six Days, before He instituted the seventh Day, in Memorial of that divine Rest, or ceasing to act, in that heavenly Operation of making the World. It seems plain to me that this was the Institution of the Sabbath for *Mankind*, and that our first Parents were the principal *Parties*, to whom this Declaration of the Sanctity of the seventh Day was made.

*Gen. ii. 2, 3.* is an historical Account of appointing or separating the seventh Day, as a Memorial of his own finishing his Work in six Days; not as a divine Soliloquy, but as a *Declaration* to *them*, a Precept with which God closed the Account of the Creation, and which was the second Law which He gave them, if not the first.

2. This



2. This was a Day on *this Earth*, a seventh Portion of *our* Time in this World; it was measured by the successive Absence and Return of the Sun. Such a Dimension of a Day can only belong to those who inhabit such a Globe or spherical Habitation, and such a System as ours, where there are such regular Revolutions of Day and Night, alternate Darkness and Light. We cannot conceive such a mechanical Measure of Duration to belong to the holy Angels; who for ever live under the refreshing Beams of the Divine Presence, as in everlasting Day; and who range freely and unconfined, according to the Activity of their spiritual Nature, thro' every System of the natural World.

3. This appointing a Season of holy Rest was more congruous to our Nature, than to that of the holy Angels, and therefore this is more likely to be an Account of the Institution of a Sabbath *for us*, than for *them*. We are compound Beings, who have Exercises for the Body, as well as the Mind; and so may require some Cessation from the one, in order to a more attentive Application to the other. But this seems not to be so suitable to unembodied Spirits.

And tho' it be true, that the Labours of Paradise were not fatiguing; yet still they were *Labours* of a bodily Kind; for they were to dress and keep the Garden. They had an Occupation, tho' a pleasant One; and so they must stand in need of some Time to rest from it, while engaged in Devotion, in the particular Work of Commemorating the Finishing of the Creation in six Days, and Celebration of the divine Praises.

If it be said that there is no assigning a Reason for positive Precepts. Yet however there is always a Reason for them, tho' we cannot always discern it; for none are in themselves arbitrary; and this is a probable one that Seasons of Rest from one Kind of Labour, are more necessary for us, to qualify us for another, than for the Angelical Nature, which is of superior Activity.

4. It is expressly said, that God *blessed* the seventh Day, and *sanctified* it. But *Time* is capable of no Holiness or Unholiness, of no Sanctifying or Hallowing, but on Account of those *Uses* to which it is consecrated, for which it is separated, and in which it is to be employed. So that we must understand these Words, *God sanctified the seventh Day*, in a Way consistent with the Nature of Things, He gave it such an Holiness as it *was* capable of, not such as it *was not* capable of. And he thus *separated* it, *for those* Creatures, to whose Natures a Rest was *most* congruous, rather than *for those*, to which it was *less* congruous; *for those* who had two Sorts of Work to do, bodily and spiritual, rather than for those who had only intellectual or spiritual.

From these Considerations, I conclude that the sanctifying the seventh Day, was a declaring to our *first Parents*, that he appointed this Portion of *their* Time, successively, in a special Manner for Devotion. That *they* should rest from their ordinary paradisaical Labours, and solemnize this Day, in pious Commemoration of *his* finishing the Creation in six Days, and in magnifying his adorable Perfections.

5. This History of the Consecration of the Sabbath, and the Reason of it, is repeated in the fourth Commandment. *Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it*



it holy. The very Manner of putting this Law intimates that it was an old one. They were carefully to *remember* it, and therefore they knew it before. But probably they had too much forgot it, which may be the Reason why they had this singular Caution not to forget it, which is not prefixed to any other Precepts of the Decalogue. And further, the Reason, that is given for it, is this great primitive One, God's finishing the Creation in six Days, which (doubtless) was a Part of the original *Tradition* from *Adam*, but which he knew only by *Revelation*.

I see no Reason to question; but, if this was known to *Adam*, it might be known to the *Abrahamic* Family. For *Abraham* was brought up with *Terah* and *Serug*, who were brought up with *Noah*, who was brought up with *Methuselah*; who had been long conversant with *Adam*. It might, indeed, have been much neglected, during the patriarchal Pilgrimage in *Canaan*, and more especially, during the Bondage in *Egypt*, but this will not prove that they never knew it, but will make it appear more proper that they should be commanded to *remember* it.

6. It cannot be justly alledged, that this Account of sanctifying the Sabbath was inserted by *Moses*, in the History of the Creation, by Way of Anticipation. For I apprehend that the two Tables were the first written. The Book of *Genesis* and all the rest of the *Pentateuch* were drawn up afterwards, in the Leisure of the Wilderness, as God saw fit. This Fact of God's sanctifying the Sabbath, was first divinely written in the two Tables. But when *Moses* writ down the History of the Creation afterwards; he inserted it in its proper Place and Order of Time; of which original Events, there was, probably, some Tradition among them, down from *Abraham*, who lived about forty Years with *Serug*, who had the Antediluvian Traditions from *Noah*.

But however, what was written in the fourth Commandment, was certainly true History, and cannot, I think, be understood otherwise than thus; that, when God ceased from Creation, he hallowed the next Day, or the *seventh*. This is assigned as the Reason for it's being kept holy, in perpetual *Succession*, by the *Jews*; and sure it would be as good a Reason for it's being so observed by the *Patriarchs* at first.

7. There are some plain Intimations that a seventh Day was remarkable in the most antient Times. *Noah*, after the Dove first went out, staid, *other seven Days*, and sent it out again, and it brought an Olive Leaf in its Mouth. Then *after other seven Days*, he sent out the Dove, which returned no more to him.\* And this was a remarkable Division of Time, in different Countries of old, as in *Syria*. On *Jacob's* Marriage with *Leah*, he was to observe a seven Days Festival, *fulfil her Week*; and then he might have his true espoused Wife, *Rachel*.†

I own these Passages do not point to a religious Observation of the *seventh* Day, but they plainly point to a Custom of dividing Time into seven Parts; and

\* Gen. viii. 10, 12.

† Gen. xxix. 27.



and there can be no Reason assigned for such a Division, but this Divine Institution, which is so probable as this.

5. The Supreme Deity, whose Existence was revealed to them, enjoined a Law, with Penalties to which they should be obnoxious, upon the Transgression of that Law.

This Law God gave, I think, on the sixth Day. Suppose Adam was created in the Morning of the sixth Day. The History of the Creation, as related by Moses, would but require a very short Time to relate to Adam; and this with all Pauses necessary, in pointing to every Object, to make the Narrative intelligible; this, therefore, was his first Teaching. After this, Adam, might be removed, or led, by the Presence of *Seraphim*, into Paradise, and be shewn the Tree of Knowledge, and receive the Law concerning Abstinence from it, and the important Limitation he might have Time to think of, as he already knew the Law-giver. Then he might be cast into a deep Sleep, or Extasy, as the *Septuagint* translates it, while Eve was created. Then she was brought to him, and he received the Explication of the Nature of the marriage Union, as it is plain he did, † This we know God said to them, by the best Expositor, *Christ* himself. And finally, this working Day might close with the Institution of the Sabbath; and (as I think) the Appointment of Worship; that Man might not be one Day without Religion,

Concerning the giving of the Law, every material Circumstance was clear to them. The Time when it was given, whether to Adam alone, or after the Creation of Eve; in what Manner it was revealed; and all the gentle, or awful Formalities, with which it was promulged.

They could expatiate on the Goodness of God, and the Lenity of his Law, that he should restrain them from one Fruit only, when he bountifully granted all the Abundance of Paradise besides. And they could not but observe the Sovereignty of God, when he made the punctual Abstaining from this Fruit the Condition of enjoying all the rest. They could enlarge on the Nature of the Penalty, which was, doubtless, very clearly and explicitly made known to them, whatever Obscurity there may now appear in it to us. There seems to be nothing necessary to give the Law its full Force, but to explain what the Law-giver meant by Death. There could be no Occasion to insert God's Displeasure in the Threatening, since that must be implied in the very Nature of the Thing.

These Facts and Revelations were all the Fountains of Knowledge that were opened to them, in their State of Innocence; and so perfect an Intellect as theirs could scarce have Occasion for much more.

They knew God as the all-perfect Father and supreme Governour of the Universe. A Sense of God's Goodness must have begot Gratitude, and a Sense

\* Vid. Dr. John Owen, Dr. Watts, and Dr. Wright, who have each writ learnedly on this Subject.

† Matt. xix. 4, 5.



of all his Perfections, Piety, and Religion. They could have no Temptation to any common Vice. Felicity and Fulness must have created Contentment; their own mutual Excellencies must have begot social Delight; and the Dignity of their Nature must have kept them erect, that they could not have stooped to any thing mean and below themselves, from any Principle within. But yet to prevent their falling into Security, they were warned of Danger, as I apprehend from some Tempter from without; and the Image of Death was painted on the Prospect. If they were either inclined or seduced to Disobedience.

All this Knowledge they had in their State of Innocence, which was a copious Knowledge of Good, for they knew God and themselves, and their Relation to him, their Dependence and Obligations.

6. Another memorable Event was this. Our first Parents were tempted, seduced and fell.

This Fact with these following, were their new Acquisition in a State of Sin. They knew Evil at least, better than before. And it was adorable Mercy that every new Discovery after this, was not of the like sable, melancholy, horrid Kind.

The Seduction and Fall of our first Parents was an Event which they knew in all its Circumstances; and it was of so affecting a Nature, that they could not but enlarge on it, in relating it to their Offspring; so that it must naturally make very strong Impressions on their Descendants.

They could explain the mournful Original of Sin and Sorrow in our World, and account for the Introduction of these detested Strangers into their primitive Seat of Innocency and Happiness; and which were afterwards their sad Company in the common World. This doleful Event of their Temptation and Fall, they could distinctly open, in its Beginning, its Progress, and its fatal Accomplishment. They could describe with what plausible Pretences the Temptation was conducted, with what unsuspected Varnish the hellish Design was covered over. What Air of Innocence in itself, and Good-will to them, was insidiously put on.

They could relate *how long* they stood, before the Tempter made this fatal Attack upon them; and what Notion they had of him; whether they took him, at first, for a real Brute, endowed with the human Faculties of Speech and Reason, by the Virtues of that forbidden Fruit which he might accidentally meet with, as many of the *Rabbins* think; or, whether they had any Notion of any spiritual evil Being, who might assume the Appearance, or usurp the Organs of the Serpent. *Eve* could relate what Time was consumed in the pernicious Conference, what deceitful Arguments were made use of; her own inordinate Passion for the fair Appearance of the Fruit; and what Changes were made in her Heart, when her Integrity begun to stagger. What proud Expectations she was poisoned with, when she hoped to be as the *Elohim*, who attended the *Presence*. What strange Confidence she was infatuated with, when she first ventured to believe that *she should not surely die*, tho' she sinned. Again; she could report what Doubts as to the Divine Authority, what ungrateful Jealousies



Jealousies and dishonourable Suspicions of Divine Goodness and Love, insinuated themselves into her Breast, when she thought of bettering her Condition by Sin.

All these Particulars, and many others obvious to them, might furnish Matter to our first Parents, for very useful and affecting Lectures to their Children, on the Weakness of *Man*, even at best; and afford Admonitions and Cautions against all future Temptations, that might come in their Way.

7. *A seventh moving Fact* was this, viz. on the Account of Sin, our first Parents were expelled *Paradise*, doomed to many Sorrows, and finally condemned to *Death*, by an irreversible Sentence.

This dreadful *Catastrophe* they could set forth of their own Knowledge, both as to the Cause and Effects. They knew it was *Sin* that blasted all their Comforts, and as to them, withered all the Bloom of *Paradise*, and spoiled the noblest Work of God below. It was *Sin*, which procured the Divine Order for placing the *cherubic* Guards and the flaming Sword, for ever to bar their Return to the Tree of Life. How copious and how striking were these Subjects of Conference together, or Meditation alone! They knew the happy State they were in, before, the plausible Promises of augmenting it, and the terrible Disappointment of all these deluding Expectations. What a dismal new Scene opened, as these swelling, deceitful Dreams vanished!

They could describe the Terrors which they first felt, at the Approach of the Divine Presence, or awful *Shechinah*; the Change which Guilt made in them, at the Apprehension of such a tremendous Interview; what different Things an innocent and a guilty Heart are, with which to meet *God*. They could tell how Fear shuddered thro' every disordered Nerve; how Horrors, wholly unknown before, shook their quiet Breasts, which had not, till that fatal Time, ever felt a Storm; and how Shame covered them with Confusion. They could relate the awful Examination, under which they passed, while every guilty Circumstance was reviewed, every defenceless Step was scrutinized, every vain Excuse was discussed, and every insufficient Apology was confuted. They could rehearse their affrighted Suspence, till the Sentence was pronounced; and the speechless Agonies in which they waited for their Doom; and the racking, tormenting Anguish, with which they heard one sad Particular after another, denounced against them. They could describe the Execution too as far as it went. Their Expulsion and Exile from their delightful Abode; their Condemnation to hard Labour for their necessary Food; the Curse on the Ground on their Account; and the Difficulties of Conception and Child-Birth as to the *Woman*. --- All which immediately took place. And then finally, they went out from the *Tree of Life*, under the irreversible Sentence of *Death*, that they should return to the Earth, out of which they were taken. As a sad Prelude to all, they were driven out of *Paradise*, perhaps by some awful, heavenly Minister, who had been wont to come on Messages of Friendship and Love before.



Here came in all human Sorrows, the Cause and Date whereof they could distinctly and peremptorily assign: Hereby they could clearly answer all infidel Cavils against Providence as to the Origin of Evil. Again; whatever Alteration was made in the internal Frame, the intellectual Powers and the Dispositions of the Mind, was a Thing more perfectly known to them than ever it can be to any other. Whatever malignant Change in them was made, either by any poisonous Influence of that pernicious Fruit, or any other Way, they, who experienced it, in passing from a State of Perfection to one of Imperfection, could better describe than any other since.

8. Another very important Event was this. They had an Intimation of some Blessing to themselves, and Victory over their Enemy, in the *Woman's promised Seed*.

This was, indeed, inserted, in the Sentence on the Serpent, but that, which was so humbling to their great Adversary, must import some signal Mercy to themselves, since it was to be executed by the Seed of the Woman.

\* The complicated and accumulated Distress, which they must necessarily have languished under, after their Sentence, must have bore down their Spirits, unless they could have had some rational Foundation of *Hope*, of recovering, at least in Part, what they had lost. And yet, there is scarce a Ray of rational Hope shines thro' all this Proceeding, except in this Part of the Sentence on the Serpent. They had heard the Sentence against him, and in Part seen it executed. For they had seen him degraded from the original Nobleness of his Figure, condemned to bear the contumelious Badge of everlasting Infamy in a reptile State, and to grovel in the Dust of the Earth. And that, finally, the Seed of the Woman should overcome him, and bruise his Head, or trample him under Foot. But yet this could be but a small Consolation to our first Parents, under the inexpressible Damage they had received from that insidious Worm; so that they probably saw farther into the Meaning of the Threatening than this literal one. As they had, probably, been accustomed to the Appearance and Conference of spiritual Beings, of an higher Nature than their own; so they might now suspect, from an Event so fatal to them (if they had no such Suspicion before) that there was an higher Party than that contemptible Brute, concerned in their Seduction. They knew that a common Serpent had not the Powers of Speech and Reason; They had experienced that there were no enlightening, sapient Qualities in that Fruit, of which they had been deceived into such an high Opinion, as to think it desirable to make *one wise*. But they had found that the Temptation was a masterly, accomplished Plan of Mischief; and that God spoke to the Tempter as an intelligent, rational Agent, capable of Guilt and Punishment.

From all these Considerations they might conclude, that there were bad, as well as good Spirits, among these superior Beings, and that one of them might assume the Shape, or inspire the Organs of the Serpent, the more unsuspectingly to attack them. In this Apprehension, they might suppose that the Threatening



ing had a nobler Meaning than it literally express'd, and that the Sentence on the Serpent pointed to the latent Deceiver, which seduced them in that belied Form.

How far God at that Time, or afterwards, explained the promised Victory, by *the Seed of the Woman*, we are not told. But it seems to imply, that *this Seed of the Woman* should subvert the malicious Schemes of the great Deceiver, some Way or other; and that it should finally give a decisive Overthrow to this great Enemy of God and Man, as to all his Stratagems and Devices of Mischief. And it must then be a considerable Consolation to our first Parents, to see this glorious but malignant Instrument of their Destruction, stripped at first of all his Pride and Preheminence of Form; anticipating, in this shameful Fall and ignominious Degradation, that final Defeat and utter Diminution of Power, which was reserved for him, when the Seed of the Woman should bruise his Head.\*

9. Our first Parents knew all that God ordained concerning Worship after the Fall.

I am sensible we cannot punctually determine what Worship God was pleased to command at first. This Matter is so concisely recorded by *Moses*, that we must collect our Knowledge of it, by arguing from incidental Passages, and the common Reason of Things, rather than direct historical Information. But, however, we may find Difficulties in this Question, yet there could be none to our first Parents; who must perfectly know whatever the Institutions were, according to which they proceeded in Worship.

1. It appears to me that our first Parents, after *the Fall*, must have been in a State of some Suspence, as to *Worship*, how they were to behave themselves towards their Maker in this Respect. They must have been liable to some Doubt, whether he would accept of any Worship at their guilty Hands, and what Kind of Worship it must be, if he would accept of any at all. Even those, which are now called the *natural* Acts of Worship, could not but appear something dubious, till they were commanded.

The *Confession* of their Sin would seem to have been a natural Proceeding; but then all their Sin, in all its Circumstances and Aggravations, God perfectly knew. The humbling themselves for their Sin, would also seem to be proper, as the best they could do; but then that was the Language of Disappointment and Suffering, and might proceed from a Sense of Suffering, as much as Remorse. Petition and *Supplication* for Mercy, was natural for those that were in Distress; but as God is not a weak Being, who will be touched with Importunity, what rational Foundation could they have to hope that they could change any of the divine Purposes of Wisdom and Righteousness, by their unauthorized Importunity? This is but the *Felon's* Conduct after Sentence. They might, doubtless, be very pungently sensible of their great Calamity and extreme Exigences and Wants; but, then, they were brought into all these by  
their



their Sin. And it is not every thing we desire, that we can reasonably hope to obtain; especially after a Forfeiture of all by our aggravated ill Conduct. So that it must have been extremely difficult for them to proceed in *Devotion*, either as to Matter or Manner. It is far from being so obvious as some imagine, that a Sinner, after the most ungrateful Forfeiture of the greatest Benignity and Bounty, could, by the Working of his own Reason, attain a rational Assurance of Pardon; or that he could be encouraged, in the regular Exercises of Devotion, and pray for any Mercy that he knows is forfeited, with a firm Hope of obtaining it. It is acknowledged to be wise in Human Government to be frequently inexorable in the Punishment of Offenders, as many think it is, as to all Murders. And probably it really is so, in the Divine Government, all being really executed, that was in the original Threatening of *Death*.

2. In this Suspence as to *Devotion*, *Sacrifices* could scarce have been thought of, by our first Parents, as a proper Method of regaining the Favour of God. They knew that God was offended with themselves, but not with any Beast, except the Serpent. The rest of the animal World were innocent, and had followed the faithful Instincts of their Nature.

It must have been incongruous to their Notions of the Deity, who was kind to all his Creatures, except those who had forfeited his Kindness, to think that they should have been like to obtain his lost Favour, by a Piece of seemingly useless Cruelty, in their unauthorized, sanguinary Oblations.

3. It doth not appear, either from *Moses's* History, or the Reason of Things, that they had any Right to dispose of the Lives of any inferior Animals. They seem not to have had any Title to them, or Property in them, except for their Service and Labour, and affording them what the Animals could well spare, without receiving Hurt, such as their Milk and Wool. *Adam* might easily suspect that such Oblations of slain Animals would be esteemed *Robbery for Burnt-offering*, offering in their own Stead, what was not their own, that in which they had no such Property.

4. It doth appear that Animals were very soon slain, because the Lord clothed our first Parents with their Skins.

It is not probable that any Animals of Size large enough for such a Purpose, should die of themselves, so soon after their Creation; and as there was no Grant of animal Food so early, (*for this Grant was not till after the Flood*) we can conceive of no Reason for their being slain, so likely as this, that God, who was the Sovereign Proprietor of all, appointed them to be slain, and then offered in *Sacrifice*, in a religious Way; as an Atonement in the Room and Place of Sinners.

5. Many good Ends might be answered hereby, if it be supposed to be done by God's own Appointment.

The Oblation of the innocent Animal, in the Room of the guilty Sacrificer, if done by Order of the Sovereign Proprietor, would be an affecting Memorial of the Demerit of Sin; and an apt Mean of enforcing and fixing a Sense thereof, on the Heart of the Transgressor. Again; a Frequency in these Solemnities



lemnities would transfer the same Sentiments to their Children. It would further be a moving Exemplification of that Suffering of *Death*, which all the Race of Mankind were become liable to, by *Sin*. The Groans and Agonies of the dying Animal, its ghastly Appearance after its Death, and its Reduction to Ashes upon the Altar, all conspired to set forth the humbling Triumphs of Death over all the boasted and admired Excellency of animate Beings. What a debasing Fall must it especially appear, for the stately human Figure to crumble into Dust, or sink into Corruption and Rottenness!\*

6. SACRIFICES were actually *soon* in Use, and were *soon* eminently distinguished with the Marks of divine Acceptance. As in the memorable Case of *Abel's Offering*.†

And, if it be unlikely that this Method, of Worshipping God by *Sacrifices*, should be of Man's own Invention, it is still more unlikely that it should be so remarkably honoured with Marks of divine Favour, unless it had been divinely appointed.

In this History of *Cain* and *Abel*, there is Mention of two Sorts of Oblations, Sacrifices of Animals, and Oblations of the Fruits of the Earth. *Abel* offered a slain Animal of the Choice of his Flock, and this was accepted with signal Tokens of Favour; these were manifested in such a visible Manner, that *Cain* was sensible of the Distinction, as well as *Abel*. God had *Respect* to *Abel's* Offering, but to *Cain* and to his Offering he had not *Respect*. *Theodotion* translates *Jashab* by the Word *εκαυψεν* *inflammavit*, He set it on Fire, or consumed it with celestial Fire. This Translation is, indeed, rather *Theodotion's* Conjecture, as to the Manner of God's shewing his Approbation, than a proper Version of the *Hebrew* Word into *Greek*. But yet this Proceeding would shew particular Approbation, and was certainly sometime afterwards made use of, to manifest it.‡

*Cain's* Offering was of the Fruit of the Ground, according to his own more particular Occupation; and I see no Reason to imagine, but that, as to the Matter of the Oblations, both those of *Cain* and *Abel* were *right*, and equally agreeable to divine Institution. Our learned *Lightfoot* and several other great Men have supposed, that *Abel's* Offering was the more acceptable on Account of its being *expiatory*. But one would think, that Thank-offerings for the Mercies spared to them, must have been, in their Place, acceptable to God, as well as the *expiatory* Ones, in their Place; if offered with a devout Heart. So that both these different Kinds of Oblations were, probably, instituted by the Almighty. It cannot be accounted for, how *Sacrifices* should have been in such early Use, and have been honoured with such signal Tokens of Favour, unless they had been of divine Institution. Nor can *Cain's* Expectation of Acceptance, or his Wrath at the Disappointment, be well accounted for, unless his Oblation, as to the Matter of it, had been also of divine Appointment. *Will-Worship* has, in all Ages, been discountenanced and rejected by the all-wise God; therefore, as the very learned *Bishop Sherlock* observes, we can hardly suppose

\* *Revel. Exam.* Vol. I.

† *Gen.* iv. 4.

‡ *Vid. Synops. Crit. in loc.*



suppose that such a Mark of Distinction would have been set upon a mere human Invention.\*

7. We know, from the *Mosaic* Law, that *Sacrifices* were afterwards certainly of divine Appointment, as also the Oblation of Fruits; and what was certainly once of divine Appointment, must, in the Nature of Things, be always worthy of God, supposing parallel Circumstances.

The *Jewish* Sacrifices, which were divinely appointed, were also accompanied with eminent Tokens of the divine Acceptance; for, upon the first solemn Service of this Kind, after the Institution, a miraculous Fire from the divine Presence consumed the Sacrifices.†

8. *Sacrifices* continued so long in Use, and were so universal, that they can hardly be supposed to have had less than a divine original Institution.

If it is not admitted that they were of *divine Institution*, it is astonishing that *Adam* should propagate a Practice so cruel and detrimental, as the frequent destroying the Choice of the most useful Creatures must be. And it is incredible that *Noah* should revive it after the Flood, and recommend it to all his Posterity, so that it should become the Practice of all Nations; unless he had been firmly persuaded that it was an original, divine Institution. It is clear that it cannot be objected against the *Jews*, any more than other Nations. Those, who are called the most wise, the most polite, and most learned People, as the *Greeks* and *Romans*, went fully into the Practice of sacrificing. All these Things made an ingenious and elegant Writer observe,‡ “That a Practice  
“ which is in direct Contradiction to Reason, Nature, and Interest (for the De-  
“ struction of innocent and useful Creatures is against Reason, Nature, and  
“ Interest,) should universally prevail, is impossible to be accounted for, but  
“ from some powerful and irresistible Influence of Example, or Injunction of  
“ Authority. And what Example could have such Influence as that of *Adam*,  
“ or what Authority could have such Power, except that of God, is to me  
“ utterly inconceivable?”

Upon the whole, all these Particulars taken together will render it highly probable, that this religious Service was really instituted at first by divine Authority. And our first Parents, who languished under such anxious Suspence, about the Liberty, Matter, and Manner of their worshipping God, must be immediately sensible of the Greatness of this Privilege; and must cheerfully embrace the Token of Peace; without any Scruple as to the Rites, which were to accompany restored Devotion.

I would only here call to the Reader's Remembrance, two Things (*first*;) That all these Events were perfectly known to our first Parents, so that they could relate every one of them exactly to their Children, of their own Knowledge; and that they could no otherwise know these Facts, than by Information from them, or by some extraordinary Conveyance from God.

*Secondly*, these Facts were so extremely momentous, important, and striking, that our first Parents could not but be much affected by them, and there-

\* *Sherl. Discourses*, p. 84.

† *Levit. ix. 24.*

‡ *Revel. Exam. Vol. I. p. 128.*



therefore must unavoidably relate them all to their Children; and make a Multitude of Observations upon them all, in the Course of their Education.

## SECT. II.

*On the second Fountain of Religious Knowledge, their Reasoning from Facts.*

**A**NOTHER Fountain of Religious Knowledge, with *Adam*, *Noah*, and all the Antediluvians, was this, *viz. Reasoning from these Facts* and great Events, which they were all so well acquainted with; *Adam*, of his own Knowledge; and the rest, by unexceptionable Tradition from him. *Adam* was an Eye-witness of all these primitive Transactions, except that of the *Creation*; and he was himself so deeply interested, and so much personally concerned, that he could not but be much affected with them, and make many serious Reflections upon them.—Could he behold a perfect, finished World, without Admiration? Could he be informed of its Author, who compleated it all, in Weight, Measure and Proportion, adapted to every noble Use, without a devout Veneration for those several glorious Perfections of Power, Wisdom and Goodness, therein displayed? Could he be put into Possession of *Paradise*, without Gratitude to him who gave it? Could he lose it, without Sorrow? Could he observe the detested Cause of that terrible Change in his own Condition, without an high Abomination of it? Could he think of the mild and reasonable Law, which he broke, without the most piercing Anguish of Self-condemnation? Could he see any Part of the Execution of the Sentence, without discerning the Sovereignty and Righteousness, or strict Justice of God? And finally, could he observe the divine Proceedings in admitting him to a new Intercourse with the Almighty, in a new instituted Worship, without adoring Apprehensions of his Benignity and Mercy?—These Events were the most proper Occasions of thinking in this Manner; and why should we imagine, that they would not make such natural Reflections, according to the Nature of the several Events, they had before them? It is highly probable that they would reason upon all these Points. For,

1. Their intellectual Capacities may reasonably be supposed to have been as acute as ours. *Adam* was created in the *Image of God*, and whatever special Excellency of Dispositions might be signified by this Expression, yet doubtless there was implied in it such a Perfection of rational, mental Powers, as were necessary for a finished, intellectual Being, fit to be set at the Head of this new World. And whatever Change was made in them by the Fall, it could not reduce their understanding Faculties lower than ours are now, so that they might be able to reason as well then, as we can now, being alike fallen.

2. Their bodily Constitution was, without doubt, in greater Strength and Perfection than ours now is; inasmuch as it lasted near a thousand Years.

Now



Now it is manifest that Health of Body contributes much to the vigorous Exercises of the Mind! Our own Enquiries are often obstructed by Diseases, and retarded by Pains; as well as enfeebled by vicious Pleasures and vicious Cares. But their Meditations could not be much interrupted by bodily Indispositions, in that primitive State of Health; nor could vicious Pleasures or Cares be in Danger of embarrassing them, for some Time.

3. They had a vast Compass of Time for making their Observations, and ripening them into a rational System of Knowledge. *Adam* had all the Facts before him in vivid Remembrance; and whatever Remarks occurred to his Mind, he had Time enough to review again and again, compare them and turn them over on all Sides, till he had wrought out a more perfect Theory and Scheme of Knowledge, than probably can be expected from any one of us, from the like Premises.—We are near twenty Years of Age, before we are capable of thinking closely; whereas he was adult at first; and, then, in a few Years we are gone; whereas he enjoyed many hundred Years of Vigour of Body and Mind. It is commonly observed that one Man more easily perfects any System, by working on his own Hints, till he sees to the End of them, than two or three Persons of equal Genius can do, if they attempt to finish what he left in Sketches, and imperfect Draughts. If *Newton's* or *Milton's* noble Works had been left unfinished, they would perhaps have been so still; and the World would not yet have seen the *Principia*, the *Theory of Light and Colours*, or *Paradise Lost*. But *Adam* had several hundred Years, from laying down the Sketches and Out-lines of his System, till he had brought it to a finished Piece. Doubts might arise, Objections might start up in his own Mind, or be suggested by others, which he had full Time to weigh, discuss, and answer.

4. Our first Parents had for many Years, scarce any thing else to think of, or converse about, besides these principal Events; and therefore they must be perpetually recurring, I mean, except their common worldly Business. They had no Ancestor's Story to review; no Father's Virtues, or Armies, to recount; either for Imitation or Warning. They had no Histories of Policies, or Wars, to amuse themselves with; no fashionable Trifles, or vain Curiosities, to fill up their Time. These great Events before named, must be the Themes of their Meditation and Conference, and the Materials of their Reasoning and Speculation,—at least for many Years.

5. We have no Ground to suspect, that they were less disposed to search after Truth, or to embrace it, than we are. They could have no Prejudices to blind them, no favourite Opinions, which had taken such Prepossession of their Minds, as to make them tenacious of them, in Defiance of Evidence. They had no Leaders in Error, in whose Behalf they could be favourably pre-engaged.—There was, indeed, one *Arch-Heretic* and Parent of Error, viz. the *Tempter*. But they had smarted so severely for their Credulity, in listening to his insidious Suggestions; and had met with such sensible Confutations of his unexamined Lies, by their own Experience; that they must, for some considerable



able Time at least, have been alarmed to the highest Suspicion of every Thing that seemed to verge towards a Scheme of *Irreligion*.

These Things render it probable that they would be as well inclined to Truth, as any of their Posterity. And, if they be supposed to have had equal Dispositions for Enquiry after Truth, equal rational Capacities, and superior Opportunities in Point of Time; why may we not admit them to have had a competent Treasure of Religious Knowledge?

There seems to be no Foundation, on which to build any Doubt of their having had a Competency of Religious Knowledge, but only this, *viz.* That they had not sufficient Materials to work with, in order to carry on their Knowledge to *any Compass*, or with *any Certainty*. I now therefore proceed to shew that those remarkable Facts, which our first Parents were Eye and Ear-witnesses of, would furnish an useful Set of Principles, both of Faith and Practice, which an *ordinary* Understanding and Industry might deduce from these Premises, by fair Reasoning. So that the *Patriarchal Religion* might be a rational Thing.

I. I would join the first Facts above-mentioned all together, the State, in which they found *themselves* immediately after their Creation; the Condition of all the *World* about them, when they first awaked into Consciousness; and the *Revelation* that was imparted to them, as to the *Origin* of all Things. From these Facts they could proceed in their Reasoning, till they attained a pretty clear Knowledge of the Divine Being and Perfections, and their Relation to God as their Creator, and their Duty to him as Creatures.

1. As to themselves, according to the History of *Moses*, they first found themselves in a mature State, both of Body and Mind. They experienced no Weakness of Infancy; they observed no Dependance on Parents; or any Obligations to any. They were conscious of no Agency or Consent of their own, no Act of Will or Power exerted in their own Production, no Choice of their Size, or Strength, or Shape and Form. So that they must be sensible that they proceeded from the *Will* and *Power* of some higher Being. They perfectly knew that they did not make themselves, nor even the least Insect, or Flower, or Spire of Grass, which so plentifully covered the verdant Plain about them. But, by *Revelation*, they were informed, that God made them, and all Things in the Universe. And here their own *Reason* would confirm the *Revelation*, and dispose them readily to believe it.

The next Object, that must engage their Attention, was the *visible Creation* about them, as it presented itself to their Eye, in all its orderly Grandeur, and beautiful Perfection. The Heavens above them, and the Earth beneath them, were full of equal Beauties, tho' of different Kinds; the vast Parts of the Fabric, conspired with the most diminutive and minute, to *engage* their Admiration. While they gazed on every Prospect, and listened to every Sound, with



an Astonishment natural to new Being, God instructed them in the Knowledge of the Origin of all Things by *Revelation*. In this shortest Way, he informed them of the Creation of the whole World, by one all-perfect Mind, and infinite Spirit, who was himself invisible; and that the Universe was the Workmanship of one Hand, and the Plan of one Counsel. With this Intelligence, it was easy to proceed in their Reasoning. They saw the noble Work; and, as soon as they were told, *that one God created it*, they must be readily disposed to entertain the Report as true, for they could not but discern the high Probability of it in their own Minds. Nor was there any Necessity that their Informer should have been infallible. If an Angel had told them this, and declared that he was but another Creature of the same Power, the very first Hint imparted to them, would have led them to examine the visible Arguments before them, in Support of that angelic Testimony, and would soon have determined their Assent to it.

They beheld the wondrous Frame, and must soon perceive it was too regular, orderly, and methodical, to be formed by *Chance*. They observed themselves and all their Fellow-Creatures around them, and could not but discern, that there could be no *Pretenders* to that stupendous Operation among them all; an Insect could as easily be supposed to make a Lion, as a Lion could make a Man, or as a Man could make a Mountain or a Sun, and *vice versa*, they could see it was as easy to make a Lion as a Fly.—A careful comparing of the Report that was made to them, with Nature's ample Volumes, which lay open before them, would gradually raise Evidence from probable to certain, and from Testimony to Demonstration. For common Sense must argue thus: "All these wondrous Works must have *some* Author, "there was *no such* Author to be found among them, therefore it is fit to believe in God, the infinite invisible Mind, and common Parent of all "Things; according to the Angel's Report, or the divine Testimony of "Revelation."

2. When they came to know the Existence of one first Cause, the Creator of the Universe, these mighty Works which their Eyes beheld, would soon lead them to the Discovery of his adorable Perfections. It would require no very close abstract Reasoning in order to attain it.—The stupendous Fabric of the visible Creation, which was spread forth to such vast Dimensions, that the Eye lost itself in the immeasurable Extent, must raise the Soul to the most exalted Thoughts of the *Greatness* and *Power* of God. When they had heard that in six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, and all Things therein, and that therefore he must have acted in the remotest Extremes of the Creation at once, how must the Soul dilate with the Thoughts of the divine *Omnipotence* and Immensity! When they contracted their Views to survey the infinite Variety of the more minute Creation, which in the Plenitude of the divine Operations, filled every Part they had the Opportunity of observing; what beautiful Demonstrations of the omnipresent Energy of the Deity,



Deity, presented themselves, which filled the World with such Abundance of vegetable and animal Life?

The Omnipotent Power of God, was alike manifested by the *grand* and by the *minute* Works of the Creation, by one Sun and Moon, or by Millions of Plants, Flowers, Herbs, or Insects, since no Power we know, can make an Insect, any more than a Sun or a Star; nor a Bird or Fish, any more than a Man.—Now this Conclusion, that God is *great and powerful*, would be obtained, upon this most plain Reasoning, *That great Works must require a great Author to accomplish them.*

Again; when they came to observe, with what transcendent *Wisdom* every Thing was executed, to bring about the most noble and *useful* Ends, here would be an united Evidence of ineffable Wisdom and Goodness. The Expanse of the Heavens, the regular Surface of the Earth, the useful Collection of Waters, and the various Furniture of all these; the Lustre and Multitude of the heavenly Bodies; their obvious Usefulness to Mankind, in dispensing to them Light and Heat; the prolific and refreshing Influences of the Sun; the Rarefaction and Condensation of Vapours; the Rising of Clouds, and the gentle Distillation of the Dews and Rains, so beneficial to all the Inhabitants of this terrestrial World, were all of them evident Instances of Wisdom and Goodness. The Variety of Animals, and the Diversity of their Beauties and their Usefulness; the countless Variety of Fruits, Plants, and Flowers, of every agreeable Scent and Taste, accommodated to the several Wants of Man and Beast, afforded another Lecture on the Wisdom and Goodness of God. When they remarked that they had neither too much, nor too little Light; that the Air was neither too gross and thick, nor too rare and thin for walking and breathing in; that the Earth had a proper Solidity and Firmness for the Use of Man and other Animals of a similar Structure; that there was a greater Fluidity in the Waters, to make them suitable for Animals of a different Frame; how must their Hearts enlarge in Admiration of divine Wisdom!—When they came to frequent Observations on the regular Course of Nature, when they had seen the Sun rise and set for a few Days; when they observed the Conveniency of Sleep, after the Labours and Exercises of the Day; and found that they had regularly a Prospect of awaking again, after a short Interval of Unconsciousness and Inaction.—When they remarked how little Light they had, at the Time when they did not need it, and what a glorious Plenitude thereof was restored to them, as soon as they had Occasion for it again. When they found themselves hungry and thirsty, and were guided by some happy Instinct, or perhaps by *Revelation*, when they were told *they might eat of all the Fruits of the Garden except one*; when they were led (I say) as by their heavenly Father's Hand, to those delicious Fruits and juicy Plants, which were provided by his ample Bounty, in such luxuriant and copious Abundance, for their Refreshment and Support; when they considered all these Things, is it not very natural, to suppose that warm Transports of Admiration of the



Wisdom and Goodness of the *Deity*, would arise in their Minds, and be renewed by the Repetition of such agreeable Observations?

It is no Strain of Reason, surely, to find out that such Profusion of Bounty, bespeaks a most kind and bounteous Disposition in him who bestows it. It is so far from being difficult to discover, that it is almost impossible not to take Notice of it. If even Men of common Capacities can argue thus, that great and good and wise Operations, imply the Excellency of Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, in the Author of such Works; who can question our first Parents, arguing in like Manner. If a *Boyle*, or *Newton*, a *Clarke*, or *Abernetby*, could carry their Theory of the divine Perfections, from the same Premises far higher; who dare assert that our first Parents in many Hundred Years thinking upon them, might not be able to think as clearly on this Subject, as these celebrated Moderns, who were confin'd to so few Years, for all their Improvements in this religious Philosophy? How naturally must an attentive, honest Mind break out into such Extasies of Admiration as these: "How wisely and bounteously are all Things ordered and settled! How wise and gracious is he, who ordained them!" What a blessed Connection, might our first Parents say, have yonder distant Luminaries with this Paradise of ours! What vigilant Wisdom and Care presides over our sleeping and waking Time! What wondrous Wisdom is this in the Ordinances of Heaven, that we should lose the Sun, when we need it not, and strangely find it, on the other Side of *Paradise*, when we want it again! That it's wondrous Course has been going on, while we have slept in this fragrant Grove, and on this flowery Bed!

4. From this Knowledge of the Perfections of God, his infinite Power, Wisdom and Goodness, our first Parents might infer many Parts of Duty to the Divine Being. For tho' we are now instructed, by *his Word*, in this heavenly Service of *Religion*; so that those, who cannot reason very closely, yet may know that we should love, and fear, and obey God; because these Duties are now plainly commanded. Yet, if we set ourselves to think, with any serious Attention, we must perceive, that the greatest Power is the Object of the greatest Fear and Reverence; the greatest Excellency and Benignity is the Object of the greatest Esteem, Love, and Gratitude; and the greatest Wisdom, the Object of our highest Regard and Obedience, as to any Directions and Advice which proceed from it.

These are the very Principles on which we now argue, as common Principles which all agree in, when we recommend these pious and religious Affections to *Deists*, who do not admit the Authority of the *Scriptures*: They reverence this Argument when they reject a Text of Scripture. Now if we can, by reasoning from the Perfections of God, discover this Homage to be due to him from reasonable Creatures, why might not our first Parents be able to discover the same? For they had the Knowledge of the same Premises, to argue



argue from, equal intellectual Capacities, and much longer Time, in which to improve themselves in all the Knowledge, to which they applied.

II. I would next consider these joint Facts, the giving the Law concerning the Tree of Knowledge. Their own Disobedience to it, and the fatal Consequences of that Disobedience. And from all these Facts taken together, there must arise another Set of Principles, or doctrinal Truths, which an *ordinary* Understanding, with *common Diligence*, might deduce.

1. The giving the Law plainly set forth, that God challenged a supreme Authority over Mankind. He acted in this Legislation, as a Sovereign, who had a full Right to govern them, and explicitly exemplified both his own Supremacy and their Subjection, in that Law. When they considered this Rectoral Act of prescribing a Law, and annexing Penalties upon their Disobedience, they must be sensible that God would govern the Creatures he had made. And tho' they might not perhaps have discovered this Truth, for some considerable Time, of themselves; yet they could not but perceive it, when thus discovered.

When they seriously considered who claimed this Supremacy over them, their own Reason would easily discern that it was a most equitable Claim. They knew, by *Revelation*, that he created all Things, and they must soon discover, from his Works, that he was infinite in Power, Knowledge and Goodness; for he made *all* Things. Their Reason would soon inform them that he, who gave them all their Faculties, must have a Right to direct the Use of them; and, besides that, the natural Basis of Authority and Government, must always necessarily be infinite Wisdom and Power. The *wisest* Being must invariably be the most fit to *advise* and *direct*, the most *powerful* Being must be the most fit to *command*, because he alone, in all Circumstances, can invariably preserve Order, by a resistless *enforcing* what his Wisdom *prescribes*. And then a Being, who universally *knows* all that is *fit*, and can universally *do* all that is *fit*, must necessarily be infinitely happy; and can have no Temptation to act *unfitly*, which would be to act contrary to his own Happiness.

So that, when God's Sovereignty was once intimated to them, their Reasoning from his Perfections must convince them, that it was an equitable Authority, and no Tyranny, under which they were placed.

2. The giving of the Law plainly set forth God's *actual* Cognizance of them. As his Perfections demonstrated the legitimate Authority of the Deity or his Right, so the publishing of the heavenly Edict proved his *Will* to govern them. God hereby made it plain to them, that he would be no indolent Spectator of the Works of his Hands, but would observe whether or no they answered the noble Ends he had made them for, and improved aright the noble Powers he had endued them with.

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They might reasonably apprehend that there should be an Analogy betwixt the natural and moral World. They saw that the heavenly Luminaries above, and the Earth beneath, answered each of them most useful and noble Ends. Not a Star shone in vain, above; nor a Flower bloomed in vain, below; the Children of Nature had each their Beauty and their Use. This Transaction, of giving them a Law, intimated, that they must also answer worthy Purposes, according to their nobler Capacities. It might be well inferred, that Reason's Light must transcend the Radiance of the Sun; and that the Agreeableness of their Virtues, must excell the Fragrance of the spicy Grove, and all the glowing Beauties of the Plain. In the giving of the Law, God manifested that he would observe all their Ways with omniscient Impartiality, and proceed with them in the Suspension, or Continuance of his Favours, according to their future Conduct.

3. The Gentleness of the Divine Government would be much illustrated, from the Matter of the Law, and they would be naturally induced to delight therein, from the Easiness and Lenity of the Command. There was so copious a Grant of all the other Fruits of Paradise, that they could not but acknowledge, that this one Limitation, in Token of their Subjection, must be easy to submit to.—They had herein a lovely *Sample* of Divine Government, which must intimate to them, that their Subjection to it would not be Slavery, but *perfect Freedom*. They might, from this Sample or Pattern, make happy Presages what all their future Laws would be, if they behaved dutifully under this first easy Restraint.

They might expect that they would all be the Dictates of infinite Wisdom and Benignity, for ever concerted for their highest Good; that they would be adapted to create and diffuse a new Glory and Dignity over the Works of God, to dispose them to bear all wise Restraints, and more to illustrate the Excellency of all their Powers, by a right Use of them. They must naturally have congratulated each other on this Prospect, that they were like to be guided in Difficulties by such Wisdom, and to have no Regulations to expect, but such as they might esteem and delight in, with the highest Veneration.

This was the Knowledge of their *Innocency*; but they *fell*.

4. When they had *finned*, their Condemnation and Sentence demonstrated God's Property in, and uncontrollable Dominion over all Things. This Truth was intimated in the *giving* the Law; but it was most cogently demonstrated in the *Execution* of it. Their own Expulsion from *Paradise* shewed them that *the Earth was the Lord's*. The cursing the Ground with Barrenness, proved that all Nature was in his Hand. The pronouncing Sentence upon the Serpent, manifested the Extent of the divine Dominion, that it not only extended over the vegetable and animal Creation, but over the Tempter, or spiritual Being, which acted in the *Serpent*. When our first Parents saw that he could uncontrollably execute whatever he pleased, on every Party, in this primitive Rebellion, they must be undeniably convinced of God's absolute universal



universal Dominion. It would require no great Penetration to discover it, being an unavoidable Conclusion from the Facts.

5. The Righteousness and Justice of God, could not but be made manifest, by the great Alterations which they underwent in their own Condition.— They knew the Deity to be a most gracious Being, by manifold Experiments before. They had no Reason to suspect that ever he would *change*, till they *changed*. But they had sure Ground for such an Expectation, if they sinned, because he had told them before, what would be the certain Consequence of their Disobedience. They sinned, and they found these Consequences. Into what Cause could they resolve all these mournful Changes but this, the impartial *Justice* of God? It was obviously congruous to Truth and Righteousness, that he should treat them differently, when they had sinned, from what he had done while they were innocent. It was in great Wisdom that the Law was given; and in the same Wisdom that he annexed the Penalty upon Transgression; and certainly, if it was wise and just to threaten, it was wise and just to execute; and when it was executed, *Adam* could perceive that Justice was as much an Attribute of the Deity, as Benignity and Pity.

6. The Folly and Madness, and the destructive Nature of Sin, was another Truth, plainly manifested to our first Parents, by these melancholy Changes in their own Condition. Every Day's hard Labour in tilling the Ground, every Briar and Thorn that embarrassed them, every Danger they feared, and every Pain they felt, must inspire the most sensible Convictions, of the inexpressible Mischief and Malignity of *Sin*. They were sure that Sin was the Cause of this mournful Reverse of their Affairs, and it could require no great Talents to discover the *Evil* of the *Cause*, when they had such pungent Experience of the *Evil* of the *Effects*. These Arguments must have very clear Evidence to our first Parents, for they were most sensibly felt by them. What we feel makes the deepest Impressions, and entirely banishes Scepticism, and the Levities of doubting. They knew the Difference of perfect Innocency and Guilt, perfect Happiness and great Misery, better than any of us can do, who can never remember ourselves quite innocent, or perfectly happy.

Now these are all practical Truths, and all deducible by easy Argumentation from plain and undeniable Facts, and may be called Branches of Religious Knowledge.

III. I proceed to consider a *third* Series of *Facts*, from which our first Parents might deduce a Set of Principles for their Encouragement in *Religion*, even after the *Fall*, as well as before it.

1. The separating the *Sabbath-Day* as a Day of Rest, and *sanctifying* it, as a Day of *holy* Rest, (tho' it seems to have been instituted before the *Fall*) would



would always lead them to this Conclusion, "That the Worship of God must be the Duty of Mankind, and probably of all rational Creatures."

As soon as they seriously attended to this Institution, they must observe two Things in it, That it was to be a *Rest* from their Labour, and that it was hallowed, sanctified, or set apart for a particular Use, and to be employed in some other Way, than either that of their ordinary Occupations, or in meer Resting, or doing nothing; for it was *hallowed* for the Commemoration of the finishing the Creation of this World in six Days. Now the *commemorating* the Creation was a *Work*, or Employment of the Mind; for they must seriously think of the *Creator*, as well as the *Creation*. And this hallowing a seventh Part of their Time, seems to be a fair Occasion for instituting *religious Worship*; and directing them in what Manner they were to honour God, in the *Commemoration* of his Works; and it seems very probable that the Worship of Innocency was then ordained. It seems plain, according to the History of *Moses*, that God never left Man to make Trial what his *Reason* could have found out, either as to the Being of a God, or the Duty of worshipping him, without a *Revelation*, or something equivalent to it. For, in the History of the *Creation*, he imparted to *Adam* the Knowledge of the divine Being; and he certainly instituted the *Sabbath*, to be observed in *Commemoration* of that Work of God, which was finished in six Days, according to the preceding History;—not to be an idle Rest, but to be kept holy, separated for God's Service, in some Way peculiar to the Seventh Day. And here it is altogether as easy to believe that God, in an extraordinary Way, should discover the *Duty* of religious Worship, as that he should discover the *Object* of it, in an extraordinary Way; which yet appears plainly to have been the Case, according to the History of *Moses*.—It seems more easy to infer the *Being* and Perfections of God from the Works of Creation, without a *Revelation*; than to infer the *Duty* of worshipping God, or addressing to him in *Praise* or *Prayer*, without a *Revelation*. For, tho' Reason would easily instruct us in these Points, that we should honour supreme Perfections, as soon as we know them; that we should be thankful to a great Benefactor for great Benefits; that we may desire good Things, and perhaps some which we do not possess; and so our Reason would lead us to inward Meditating on the divine Perfections, when alone; or speaking of them to each other, in order to excite dutiful Affections towards God; yet actual Worship, or addressing ourselves to the invisible Deity, speaking to him in the solemn Forms of Devotion, seems to require *Revelation*, for the Ground of Hope that it will be certainly accepted. —I am, indeed, very sensible, that to all this it may be objected, "Are not Prayer and Praise Means of Virtue? And can there be any Doubt, whether the Means of Virtue, are not acceptable to the Deity, as well as Virtue itself? Does not Reason teach Men this?" However, this (I think) must be allowed, that, when we are once directed to worship God, we must speedily see that this Homage is congruous to the Perfections of God, and



and our Relation to him. And our first Parents apprehend that their Worship could not, on the one hand, be profitable; nor on the other, that their Omission could be detrimental to the immutable Deity; yet they must have been sensible of a Decency and Congruity in these religious Services, when once it was intimated to them, that God would accept them.

2. This divine Intercourse must probably cease at the *Fall*. And, if it did, it could not be resumed by our first Parents, with any great Hope of Success, till they should be authentically restored to the Privilege of *Devotion*, which they had forfeited; and, as some think, should be directed both as to the Matter, and Manner of their Worship.

They were, doubtless, in a State of Trial at first; and, tho' they were placed in an happy Situation, and might hope for their Continuance therein, upon their Obedience; yet I cannot see what reasonable Hopes they could entertain, if they fell.

There could be no Propriety in inserting in the Law of Innocency, any Intimations of Mercy, in case they should violate the Law, and become obnoxious to the *Penalty*; for such Intimations would have been an unreasonable Abatement of *it's* Cogency and Force. So that Devotion and Hope must stand still, till they found how the Divine Majesty would proceed in Judgment, and when Death would be inflicted upon them.

But, as we find that they were so soon engaged in *Devotion*, after their *Fall*, we may conclude that there was a new Institution of religious Worship, which must have encouraged them to *hope* for some Kind of Mercy from their offended Creator.

The Nature of the Rites which they observed, and which therefore God ordained, was so different from their former Devotions in Innocency, that we may reasonably conclude the Matter was very different too. The Rites were plainly concerted in Accommodation to their Change of Circumstances. Offering slain Animals, in their own stead, was a Service proper for the Guilty alone; and their Devotions, or the Matter of their Prayers, must (no doubt) have been also proper for the Guilty. If they were commanded to offer an Atonement for their Sin, they might be allowed to pray for the Pardon of it, and must take some Encouragement, that their new Devotion should not be in vain.

3. The Sentence pronounced upon the *Serpent*, set forth the divine Dominion to be universal. This awful Process plainly demonstrated, that there was no potent Evil-being, to be the Patron of Sin, equal to God, the omnipotent Parent of Good; no opposite Power, able to contest the Empire of the World with the Most High. They saw the Head of the great Apostacy condemned, and crushed before their Eyes. The brutal Organs he made use of, debased and degraded from a noble Form, into one of the most abject, contemptible, and hateful, ignominiously crawling in the Dust of the Earth. They saw that the great Deceiver himself, whatever Triumph his



insidious Wiles had gained over them, had neither Power nor Artifice to withstand, or elude the righteous Cognizance of God, who could uncontrollably punish this capital Author of Iniquity, according to his Will. †

Now, the Belief of God's universal Dominion, is the Foundation of all Religion; and this grand Point being thus undeniably proved, by God's authoritative judging the great Author and Advocate of Sin, our first Parents must have been sensible that there could be no Hope of any Alliance, or Confederacy in their Rebellion against God, in which they could ever confide. They must be sensible that, whatever Hopes of Happiness they could entertain, must subsist, not in a continued Avowing, but in an entire Renouncing their Rebellion: And that, if there was to be any new Dispensation of Grace, the Matter of the new Law of Grace, and the Conditions, on which they could have any Hope of Acceptance, must be in full Opposition to the Interests of the Apostacy.

If it be said, that this Proof of God's universal Dominion, is no *Encouragement* to Religion, after the Fall, yet it must sure be a cogent *Discouragement* to Irreligion. And, if our first Parents found that they survived the Sentence of *Death*, they must behave *some Way*, either religiously or irreligiously; but they found that God had an uncontrollable Dominion over the Advocate of the Rebellion; therefore the Party of Sin and Irreligion was utterly desperate; their own Reason therefore would go thus far, upon this Fact, that whatever Hope they could have, must be in Religion only.

4. The Promise to Mankind, of a Victory over the *Tempter*, by the *Seed of the Woman*, was an Encouragement to expect, that a new Dispensation of Grace would be discovered, and new Terms proposed to them, upon a Compliance with which, they might hope for some Degrees of Mercy by, or thro' this Victory.

I have shewn that they could not understand this Promise of a Victory, literally, that these Words should signify no more than this, *viz.* That Men should have a perpetual Antipathy to Serpents, and that they should frequently be able to knock them on the Head.\* It must point to the great Seducer himself. *I will put Enmity between thee and the Woman, &c. i. e.* there should ensue a perpetual Enmity in Mankind, to the Designs of this Evil Being, and that Men should be finally successful in their Oppositions to him; for the Event was predicted in such Terms, as bespoke greater Hurt to the *Tempter*, than to the *Seed of the Woman*.

Now the principal Part of the Tempter's Victory over our first Parents, was seducing them to Sin; therefore, if there was to be constant Enmity, or lasting War, it was to be of the same Nature with the first Assault,—a continued

† Here I think they must obtain the Notion of the Existence of the Devil, or an invisible disobedient Spirit, who set himself in Opposition to God, tho' inferior to him. And this Notion would be propagated, as well as the rest, by *Tradition*, to the Time of the Dispersion, by Noah himself. Vid. Warburt. Div. Leg.

\* Vid. Bp. Sherlock's Discourses.



tinued Endeavour of the great Adversary to seduce Men to Sin, and their continued Endeavour to repel his Temptations and avoid Sin. An Enmity and Victory were both predicted; and, as they sadly knew that his first Conquest over them consisted in making them sinful, and so casting them out of God's Favour, they might infer that their reciprocal Conquest over him, must be of a \* similar Nature, *that is*, in becoming righteous, and maintaining such an uniform Practice of Religion and Virtue, as might finally restore them to the divine Favour and Acceptance, and to a Tranquillity in their own Hearts.—This Sense, at least, of the original Prophecy, was easily intelligible then; it might be gathered from their own Circumstances, when this Prediction of their Victory was made known.

If they had a particular Explication of this Prophecy, pointing to the Messiah, it was then a more ample and explicit Discovery of a new Dispensation, and a new State of Trial, on new Terms, and new Hopes.

5. The Sentence on our first Parents themselves plainly set forth, that they should have a Reprieve as to the executing the Threatening of *Death*. The Pains and Difficulties of Conception and Child-bearing; their daily Labours for necessary Bread; their Embarrassment with Thorns and Thistles, in the Cultivation of the Ground, and other worldly Sorrows, finally terminating in *Death*;—all these explicitly assured them, that they should be spared some indefinite Time, before their Dissolution; and that they should be succeeded by a Posterity, in like Circumstances, as *Adam* begot his Sons in his own Image. *Gen. v. 3.*

They must, after such an Intimation of the *Victory* by the *Seed of the Woman*, be naturally inquisitive, what this Space of Patience was allowed them for; unless it was to carry on this War, and obtain this Victory? They foresaw by the Sentence upon themselves, that it must be a Time of great Trouble and Suffering; yet they could scarce apprehend that it was only for suffering's Sake, that they were to be continued awhile; and that, after that Time of worldly Troubles, God would successively extinguish them and all their Seed. Could they think that they were spared, meerly to raise a Posterity to inherit *their Curse*, and to be their Successors in their Estate of Sorrows; to labour for Bread, to contend with Diseases, fight the tedious War with their great Enemy, and then at last fall in the Field of Battle, and go into Dust and Oblivion? — Their fairer Hopes methinks might be; that the Time of their being spared in this World, was to be a Time of Probation and Discipline, in which, tho' they might suffer many Things, as a Punishment for their Sin, yet they might exhibit daily Proofs of their Fidelity in the War against *the Seed of the Serpent*, and of their Vigilance and Stead-

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diness,

\* They had no Commerce with the Tempter, as he was a spiritual Being, but when he visited them. And they had no Alteration to make in him or his Condition; they had only this Care upon their Hands, to prevent his Arts making any in them for the worse; in the Whole of Things, they had only a defensive War.



dinits, in their Resistance to the Schemes of the great Apostate, and reconcile themselves to God, by new Obedience. And again; they might soon find by Experience, that all their worldly Calamities might be rendered very useful to them in their State of Discipline.\*

6. Their own Sentence, joined to the promised Victory of the Seed of the Woman, would lead them to think what Kind of Mercy they could hope for.

Their being liable to hard Labour, bodily Pains, Diseases and Death, was so peremptorily declared, and determined with such a decretal Precision in the Sentence upon themselves, that they could not hope for a Repeal of any Part. And tho', since God had not revealed the Time, Length, or Degree of their Afflictions, they might pray for a deferring of Death, a Mitigation of their Pains and Sorrows, and such like; yet still Death was their unchangeable Doom.

But then, they must be sensible of an *Happiness*, very different from that which consisted in Ease, or Health of Body, Length of Life, or any outward Conveniencies whatsoever, viz. The Enjoyment of God's Favour, and the Peace of their own Minds. And also an *Evil*, very different from any worldly Sorrows, God's Displeasure, and the Disapprobation of their own Consciences. They had felt the corroding Anguish of a spiritual Kind, in their being under God's Displeasure; and could compare it with the soft Calm and serene Tranquillity which they possessed before, in the uniform Enjoyment of the Divine Favour.

The Tempter's Victory over them, had brought them into this sad Condition; they might therefore hope that their Victory over him would restore them to some, at least, of the *Comforts* which they had lost. But, as we have observed, they could not hope for the Restoration of those Mercies, which were in the Sentence declared to be irrecoverably lost, their Immortality and the Concomitants of it; they could not hope to be exempted from the Effects of the Curse on the Ground, bodily Pains, Diseases and Death; — therefore their Hopes must terminate in *spiritual* Mercies.

7. These joint Facts, the Threatening of *Death* upon their sinning; the Sentence on all the Parties in the Transgression, and the Institution of Worship for Man, after his Transgression, would intimate a future State.

1. The Threatening of *Death* upon their sinning, would, in the common Notion of *Death*, intimate a future State.—It seems reasonable to suppose, that our first Parents must have been instructed in the Nature of their own Make and Constitution, as a Compound of Body and Soul, *before* they received the Law of the forbidden Fruit, with the Penalty of *Death* annexed. And indeed they immediately found by Experience, that they had in them a thinking conscious Power or Principle, and a Body with the Properties of Solidity, Properties entirely different from thinking.—The Law was given, *after* they were put into Paradise, and had the forbidden Fruit shewn to them; but it must have been expedient, that they should have had the Knowledge of the Law-giver

\* Vid. Taylor. Script. Doctr.



Law-giver imparted to them, *before* the Publication of his Law. It seems plain that the Knowledge of God was imparted to them in the History of the Creation. *In the Beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.*—In this History of the Creation drawn up by *Moses*, we are told, that after all inanimate and inferior Things were made, God at last created Man. *Gen. i. 26, 27. And God said, let us make Man in our Image, and after our Likeness, and let him have Dominion over all the inferior animal Creation.* This Event is set down in Terms, which plainly denote an higher and nobler Nature, than that which was imparted to the inferior Animals. And yet this grand Expression, the *Image of God*, could not relate to the bodily human Shape; because that would propagate debasing and unworthy Notions of the infinite Deity, to suppose any Resemblance of a material Kind.

It must therefore refer to their intellectual Capacities, or rational Faculties. *Moses* repeats the Account of the Creation of Man. *Gen. ii. 7. And the Lord God formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath or Spirit of Life, and Man became a living Soul:* This Account seems to relate both to the Formation of his Body, and Creation of his Soul. He became a living Soul. This Expression seems to signify some Eminence and Superiority of their vital Nature, because it is not made use of, in describing the other Animals, tho' they had all of them the Breath of Life as well as *Adam*. He became a living Soul, a *rational Soul*, as the *Arabic Version* has it. He was endued with the Powers of *Reason*, as *Mr. Taylor* explains it. Now, if this Account of Man's Creation was *proper* to be given to *Moses*, and to us, to convey a due Notion of the Dignity and Superiority of the Nature of Man; it must have been as *proper* to be communicated to *Adam* himself; that he might be acquainted with the Dignity and Superiority of his spiritual Nature above the animal One. That he was rational, and the Brute Creation was not, would soon be observed, there was no Help-meet for a rational Conversation. Wherefore this distinct Account was given, for instructing him more particularly in the Notion of his Soul's being distinct from the Body, as well as nobler than that. Our first Parents were *then* instructed in the Knowledge of their compound Nature, *before* the Law of Innocence was promulgated.

2. It must be necessary, in order to their Understanding the Penalty, that they should know what was the precise Nature of *Death*. A Law, as the great *Mr. Locke* observes\*, requires the plainest and directest Words; and God, who revealed the Law, could easily reveal the Sense of the Penalty, in it's proper *real* Extent. *Adam* had not, perhaps, experienced eating, any more than dying, at that Time; yet the Meaning of both could be made fully intelligible, when the Law was given in those Terms. And doubtless, God made him acquainted with the precise Nature and Meaning of the Penalty, as well as the Prohibition; for it would not appear worthy of Divine Wisdom and Rectitude, to leave the Sense of the Penalty vague and indeterminate, as it

\* *Locke's Reason. Christianity*, p. 4.



it must have been, if they could understand it in *two* Senses, either of a *ceasing to be*, and the Death of the whole Man, or the Death of the Body, and *ceasing to be in an incorporated State*.

3. The same Word is made use of by the same Historian, *Moses*, in all his Descriptions of this great Change of Mankind ever after; and therefore, we may fairly conclude that the Word, *Death*, had the same Sense in all these Places.—The THREATENING in the Law of Innocency was *Death*; in the Day thou eatest *thou shalt die*. The SENTENCE pronounced upon the Criminals, was an Explication of the Penalty, *Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return*. Gen. iii. 19. That is, his *Body* was Dust, and *all that was Dust*, should return to it's kindred Elements; but the Soul never was Dust, it was not formed out of Matter, and so the Sentence did not affect it's Existence.

The EXECUTION of this Sentence is expressed by the same Word, *Adam* lived 930 Years, and then *died*; that which was Dust returned to Dust, according to the Sentence. All the Antediluvian Patriarchs lived so many Years each, and then *died*, according to the Threatening. *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, lived so many Years, and *died*. This Word must have had the same Sense in all those Places. But we know that Extinction of Being was not the Case of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, for, by our Lord's own Argument against the *Sadducees*, who denied a future State, they were all *alive* in one Sense, after they were *dead* in another, *viz.* in the Sense of the Penal Sanction of the Law of Innocency; therefore all the rest were alive too, after the Death of the Body, or the Return of Dust to Dust.

I conclude therefore that *Adam* was properly instructed in the true, determinate Sense of the Penalty of Death, and that the proper Notion of Death was transmitted from him, to his Posterity; and came to be in Use among them, according to his Notion of it, which Notion he received with the first Threatening.

But, if the Death of the *Body* was all that was threatened, then his *Soul* and Principle of Consciousness might remain, after that Sentence had taken Effect. I do not say that his Views of separate Existence, would be very comfortable; but he might have, and had, a Consciousness of his own Actions, during the Continuance of his mortal Life, after the *Fall*; and the Comfort, or Sorrows, that would arise from the Review thereof, might go with him, into a separate State; since, as to the original Transgression, *all*, that was *threatened*, was *executed*, for he, and (by natural Consequence) all his Posterity, were become *mortal*.

2. But again, the Sentence on the Tempter intimated a future State with *some new Hopes*. The first Thing our first Parents heard after their Examination, was this Sentence on their great Adversary, in which a perpetual Enmity betwixt the Tempter and the Seed of the Woman, with the general Success of the War, was clearly predicted. There was to be a spiritual War, and that should terminate in a Victory of a spiritual Kind, according to the Nature of the War. Now a Victory must be followed with some Advantages, some Triumph;



Triumph; and those Advantages *could not* be fully reaped but in a *future State*, because *this Life* was all a Time of War; the Advantages and Triumph could not be perfect, as long as they were in the Field of Battle, and might be liable to new Defeats; therefore they might hope for another Life, when the War should be over, and the Rewards take Place.

3. Further, the Sentence on our first Parents themselves was a further Intimation of a future State, *with Hope* of some Advantages in it. They found that they were to be spared some time in this World, before their Death. But that neither the Penalty of Death, nor their Obnoxiousness to the Sorrows and Calamities of mortal Life, would be remitted to them; and yet they found that, while they were spared here, they were always to be engaged in War with the Tempter. Tho' they had lost so much, they might not be quiet even in their melancholy State, in the Enjoyment of that little which remained; but however they were to be Conquerors over *Satan*, by the Promise; therefore they might hope for something, as the Fruit of their Victory, to be enjoyed in another World. *Paradise* was no longer theirs, and the poor Land of their Banishment they could not long keep Possession of; nor could they keep out a Train of Sorrows, while they resided therein; what could they then have to fight for, what Spirit could they have for War, who had nothing either to gain, or keep, by it? The Promise of their Victory must intimate a future State, where they might have a Reward, which they could not have here; something to gain there, when all here was lost.

4. *Lastly*, An Institution of *Worship*, for Man after his own Fall, added to these other Arguments, would strongly enforce the Hopes of a future State.

Our first Parents were become guilty, and Death was denounced against them, according to the Law. But then, they knew that there was something of a moral Nature, always inseparable from Sin; which there was no Necessity of inserting in the penal Words, or threatening of the Law, being obvious in the Nature of Things, *viz.* that God would be *displeased* with them for Disobedience, and that their own Consciences would *condemn* them for acting wrong. Their Knowledge of the *Distinction* between Soul and Body, enabled them to discern, that the Death of the Body might take Place, and yet a Consciousness of their having done amiss might remain; which might occasion the like uneasy Thoughts, after Death, as it did before; unless they had some Intimations of Pardon. But now, an Institution of *Worship* for them, who were become guilty, plainly implied that they had something to pray for as guilty, with Hopes of Success. And yet it plainly appeared, by their own Sentence, that they could not expect any Part of the Penalty of *Mortality*, should be reversed. What had they then to pray for? *What* could the *Guilty* pray for, but Pardon? *What* could *this Pardon* consist in, but removing or freeing them from, this greatest Evil, of being under *God's Displeasure* and *Self-Condemnation*; and being restored to *God's Favour*,  
and



and *Peace within*? How could this ever be obtained, but by obeying a new Law of Grace afterwards, and so pleasing God, by this new Obedience, for the Time to come; and hereby also arriving at Self-approbation?

Finally; I ask, *where* could this Favour of God be enjoyed, but in a future State of Existence? They could not be exempted from worldly Sorrows and Death, by the Supposition; and yet they were required to worship God, and pray to him. Could they imagine that a God of infinite Wisdom and Benignity, would enjoin a Work so much in vain, as praying to him, when they could have no Answer of Mercy, to expect, with any Degree of Certainty? Surely no. Therefore the Repair of this superlative moral Loss of the Favour of God, and Peace of Conscience, could fully take Place after Death. And these are intelligible Benefits, which might be all of them, easily apprehended, upon this one Principle of the Difference betwixt Soul and Body, and that they should be of different Duration. And, indeed, without this Hope of a future State, I do not see how they could have any Encouragement to undergo the frequent Mortifications and laborious Self-denials, that must attend an uniform Course of Virtue; nor what Consolation they could have in any Contest with their own Appetites and Passions. \* “A Sense of Religion without Hope, says a great Writer, is a State of Phrenzy and Distraction, void of all Inducements to Love and Obedience, or any Thing else that is Praise worthy.”

If they could not hope for the reversing the Sentence, which made them obnoxious to *Mortality* and its concomitant Sorrows; nor yet expect a future State of Favour, upon practicable Terms; what Foundation could there be for their future Endeavours to reconcile themselves to God, by a better Obedience? What Victory over their great Adversary could be proposed, that was any more than insulting their Weakness? Or what Acceptance of their Devotions, that was any more than mocking their Distress?

Persons may talk, with much Refinement, on the natural Charms of Virtue and Honour, the Amiable, the Decent, &c.

“Which Theocles in raptur’d Vision saw.” Dunciad.

But methinks, it is high enough for us, if we take it as it is stated in the Scriptures, and as we find it by Experience, that Men *should*, and that they *do* embrace Religion and Virtue, not only on Account of their natural *Loveliness* and *Decorum*, but also on Account of their full Connection with that Aggregate of *Happiness*, which results from them, in both Worlds. And Adam must have chosen it on the like Views.—This Encouragement to Religion, and this Expectation of a future State, they might attain, by a serious Consideration of those Facts and Revelations, with which our first Parents were so well acquainted. These would be taught by them to their Children, and so would compose



compose that Body of religious Truths, which was transmitted from the *Antediluvian Church*, by *Tradition* thro' the Hands of *Noah*, to Mankind at the *general Dispersion*.—This System of religious Truths remained, tho' in broken and shattered Hints, in the *Pagan World*, for many Ages. This is, perhaps, the best Account that can be given of the *Pagan Faith*, as to the Being of a God, and a future State.

*Professor Campbell* has judiciously stated this Point at large, in his excellent Book, *Necessity of Revelation*, &c. and I think it will be difficult to answer that learned Gentleman's *Argument* as to the *Fact*, that any one of them did discover by their own *Reason*, the Being of a God, and a future State.\*

The Case was thus; they had some Notion of the Being of a God and a future State, communicated to them in their Education or Conversation; tho' they knew not whence it came; and they endeavoured to find Arguments, by which to prove these Articles; and so they have, by some, been suspected to have found out these Truths themselves. But, if one examines the Arguments, one can never imagine that they discovered these Truths, which they knew not before, by this Way of arguing; since many of them fall short of proving the Truths at all, † and no bad Argument ever discovered a Truth unknown, tho' it may be made Use of, to prove one which is known already. §

I shall offer but one Argument more, to prove that there might be a Discovery of a future State, and all due Encouragement to *Religion*, after the *Fall*; which is this, that there actually were several eminent Saints in the *Antediluvian World*, from the Beginning to the End of it, who expected such a State.

*Abel*, *Enoch*, and *Noah*, are recorded by *Moses*, as famous in their Generations, for the Eminency of their Piety. And yet it appears they, all of them, met with great Enmity and Opposition from the World, or had but a short Continuance in it. They all lived with such Men, or in such Times, that their Piety and Virtue rather exposed them to the Malignity and Scorn of their Contemporaries, than procured them their Friendship and Esteem. *Abel* was envied and hated by his own *Brother*, and there is no Foundation to suspect any other Cause of that Treatment, but his Piety. *Cain*, doubtless, knew the Difference of their general Conversation, and could explain the Distinction which God made, in the Reception of their Oblations, from the obvious Difference of their moral Character. And he must have been arrived at an

\* I would note here that all those Gentlemen, who suppose that Mankind could have discovered the Encouragements to Religion, and a future State, by their own Reason alone, must allow that they could find it out more easily by their own Reason, and the Help of these *Revelations* superadded.

† Vid. *Dr. Campbell*.

§ A bad Argument cannot prove a known Truth, any more than discover one unknown.



Habit of Impiety, or he could not have blasphemously quarrelled with the Most High, for his own divine Acts; or revenged this Quarrel on his guiltless Brother. *Enoch* was a Person of illustrious Piety and Sanctity of Manners. He *walked with God*, the strongest Way of expressing a sublime Goodness. He shone as a blameless Example of Religion and Righteousness, in an Age, when Mankind was verging fast towards the Paths of Vice and Irreligion for it was long after the Distinction of the Children of God and the Children of Men was begun. *Noah* was eminent in the same Way, and *walked with God* in an Age, when the very Dregs of Immorality and Irreligion overflowed the Face of the Earth. Now had there been no Encouragement to Religion, after the *Fall*, and particularly no Expectation of a future State, their Conduct must be very inexplicable, in labouring to distinguish themselves, by such unprofitable Mortifications, and such offensive Peculiarities, as gave their Contemporaries a Disgust to them, and deprived them of those Comforts, which they might have had, in the Friendship of the World.

And again; their Fate was the most adverse and unfortunate imaginable, to lose so much of that which was their all, the Happiness of this Life, when they had no other Hopes to countervail the Loss. It would look as if both God and Man had forsaken them. *Abel* was cut off, after an exemplary Course of Piety, in the Bloom of Youth, destitute of any Guardian Power to interpose, and save him from the untimely Stroke, which that very Piety brought upon him. *Enoch* maintained a sublime Sanctity and exalted Devotion, and yet he was removed by the *Hand of God*, in the Prime of Antediluvian Strength. So that, if they had no Expectation of a future State, then their Piety and Virtue was really *punished*, instead of being *rewarded*; they had not an Equality with the most impious Profligates of their Age, who did not destroy their Health, or kill themselves as soon, by their Excesses. According to *Moses*, *Abel* was slain by the *Hand of Man*, for his Piety, and *Enoch* was removed by the *Hand of God*, as a Token of Divine Favour, for his singular Virtues. Now, if it was apprehended to be a Favour, to be removed so soon, there must then have been a prevailing Notion of a future State, better than the present. All we know of *Enoch's* Translation now, is, by the History of *Moses*, but his own Family and Contemporaries must have known it, much more perfectly and circumstantially; and that it was a Reward of his singular Virtue; and they must have taken it, not only for such a particular Reward, "But as a further Proof and Illustration of the Doctrine of a future State, and a Sort of Pledge and Witness of Eternal Life."\* But we cannot suppose that this was the first Hint of a future State, it was only an authentic Confirmation of their Hopes in it, and an Exemplification of it.†

C H A P.

\* *Boyle. Serm.*† *Vid. Jude, ver. 14.*



## C H A P. III.

*On the New Testament Doctrine of a future State.*

**Object.** **I**T may be said, that this Account of *Adam's* Faith in a future State, or this Notion of a future State, which we suppose him to have acquired, by his own Reasoning upon those Facts and Revelations, with which he was acquainted, is not agreeable to the Doctrine of the *New Testament*; and that therefore, it was false Reasoning.—I shall attempt to shew, that it is agreeable thereto, and that therefore it is really true, whether *Adam* believed it or not. It will I think appear, on a serious Consideration of the Doctrine of the *New Testament*, that the Difference betwixt this and the Patriarchal Creed, is chiefly as to the *Degree*; the Gospel carrying the Accounts of a future State to a much greater Perfection. It contains in it all that *Adam* could know, and a great deal more. The highest that *Adam* could advance from any Hints, which are mentioned by *Moses*, was to attain a Notion of a separate State, in which he might hope on a new Obedience, for some Happiness; to encourage him, and spirit his Labours of Piety and Virtue. The Gospel seems to confirm *Adam's* Faith, as far as it went; but then it goes far further, and opens all the glorious Mystery of the *Resurrection* State, and the Wonders of the Kingdom of Heaven.

II. The Texts of the *New Testament* concerning a future State are of two Sorts, some relating to the Beginning, and some to the Finishing, or Perfection of that State.

As to the first Class, those Texts which relate to the Beginning of our Condition after Death; they seem all to point to a State of *Consciousness*; such a one as the Patriarchal Church might have a Notion of.—The first I shall mention, is that famous Petition of the penitent Malefactor, which he put up to Christ upon the Cross. *Luke xxiii. 43. Lord, remember me, when thou comest into thy Kingdom.* This Petition plainly intimates, that this remarkable Convert had exalted Notions of the *Dignity* of Christ, and apprehended that he should enter into his *glorious Kingdom*, or a glorious future State, as soon as he had finished his Work of suffering below. How he came by this Notion, is not very material to determine here; whether by Inspiration, or by careful Consideration of the Things he heard and saw, concerning Christ, compared with the general Notion of a future State.—Our blessed Lord's Reply is very remarkable, *THIS DAY shalt thou be with me in PARADISE.* These Words express both the *Time* of this Promise taking Place, and something of the *Quality* of the State promised. It was to be in *Paradise*, which had an Idea



of Pleasure annexed to it. *This Day*, immediately after thy Death, thou shalt be *with me* in that State, where *I shall be*, during the Space betwixt my Death and Resurrection. Our Lord here made a gracious Promise to him, perhaps the only personal One that ever was made to any dying Penitent, that he should that Day be with Christ in *Paradise*. Now he must needs understand this Promise to import some Benefit which he was to partake of, *that Day*; he was to *be so* with Christ in *Paradise*, as to be sensible of the Felicity of that *Interview*, to *know* that he was with him, in a State of Comfort. — A Statue, or a Man asleep, may be said to be with us, if in the same Room; but it is the same Thing to them, whether they be with a Malefactor, or a Prince, in a Prison or in a Palace. But our Lord here made a Promise, consisting of three Parts, the *Time* when it was to take Place, and the Privilege of *Company* and *Situation*; *with me*, in *Paradise*, which could signify no less than this, that he was to be conscious of the Performance of this Promise, in Kind and Time; and be sensible of some Pleasure in that Company and Situation, *with Christ* in *Paradise*. So that, according to this Text, the Doctrine of the *New Testament*, concerning a future State, was this, that it shall be a State of Consciousness after Death, and before the Resurrection. For the Body of Christ, as well as that of the Malefactor, was at that Time, on the Cross, or in the Grave, when this Promise was to take Place.

The second Passage I shall mention is, 2 Cor. v. 6—8, in which the Apostle prefers that State of Nearness to Christ, which should take Place immediately after Death, (for it belonged to all good Men out of the Body) to that State of Distance, or Absence from him, which belonged to all who were *in the Body*. — In the Beginning of this Chapter, he gives an Account of their Christian Hopes, as to their State after Death, which animated them to bear patiently their Christian Sufferings in this Life. *For we know that if the earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, a Mansion eternal in the Heavens.* And tho' we, who are but as in a Tent, do now groan with the Inconveniences or *Burdens* of it, yet we are not impatient, in desiring to be divested of it, how much soever we prefer the Celestial Habitation to it. However, being *confident*, or having a firm Persuasion of the good Issue of our Labours in this Sojourning in the Body, we are *well pleased to be absent from the Body*, and from that Society we may have in it, *and to be present with the Lord*, among that heavenly Multitude that are with him, *ἐνδύναμις πρὸς τὸν κυρίον*. But this Account, which the Apostle gives of their Christian Complacency, at the Thoughts of Death, is difficult to explain, if they were, immediately after Death, to pass into an insensible State. For must it not follow, that those good Men, who are *in the Body*, and so have *some Sense* of Christ's Presence, must be more properly *with Christ*, than those who are *out of the Body*, and so have *no Sense* at all of his Presence? It would seem that an unconscious State is neither a State of Presence nor Absence, in a proper Sense, nor that can be either desired or feared, for itself.

Again;



Again; the great Apostle speaks much to the same Purpose. *Philip. i. 23.* &c. *I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a Desire to DEPART, and to be with Christ, which is far better FOR ME, and the abiding in this Life, which is more necessary on your Account, &c.* St. Paul, from a noble publick Spirit, underwent chearfully all the Troubles and Difficulties which attended the Discharge of his *Apostolic Work*; as it is laid down in the Beginning of the *Chapter*; and yet he intimates full Expectations of his own Reward also. *To me, to live is Christ, and to die, Gain. ver. 21.* If he lived, it was to serve the Christian Cause; if he died, it should be his own Gain. Therefore, says he, *what to wish I cannot tell, or I WILL NOT presume to declare my Wishes, &c.* being a future Verb, for I am in a Strait betwixt these two, the *desiring to depart*, and to be with Christ, which is far better for me, and the *remaining longer in this Life*, which is more needful for you. Here arose a Kind of tender Struggle in his benevolent Heart, which Alternative he should wish for, tho' he owns he has a Desire to depart, and to be with Christ, as far better for himself. But it is very difficult to account for his *desiring to depart*, or to *shorten the Time of his Usefulness* here, when it was to be exchanged for a State of Insensibility. How could St. Paul be justified, in desiring to be dismissed from those useful Labours, or from *doing much good*, to be removed to a State, in which he was to *do nothing*? No good at all to others. And again; how could it be called *much better for him*, to leave a State in which there was much *Satisfaction and Comfort*, to go to one, where there was *no Enjoyment*, no Felicity, no Consciousness, or Perception of any Thing?—These Texts are rational and intelligible, on Supposition of a remaining Consciousness after Death; tho' before they arrived at the State of full heavenly Perfection. But to desire Death, or a State of Insensibility, under the Notion of it's being better than an imperfect Happiness, is scarce intelligible; and to desire a State of *no Usefulness*, nor any Happiness, in Exchange for *some Happiness and great Usefulness*, must be judged criminal, or weak, or both.—If, as *Crellius* and others alledge, the Space betwixt Death and the Resurrection, be as nothing, because a Time of Sleep; and that the Time of our falling asleep, and our awaking, are as two contiguous Points, or Moments, in the Line of Duration, betwixt which nothing intervenes, to those who sleep;—If it be so, I say, yet it cannot be desirable to fall asleep; nor can the Apostle be justified in that Desire. Since they, who sleep, must lose all that Comfort, which they might have enjoyed in their Communion with God, or the Gratitude and Friendship of Men; and the Church of Christ must lose all that Space of Usefulness, which it might have enjoyed, by their further Continuance in it, for this would be the Case, a Space of Usefulness, and some Degrees of Happiness are certainly lost; and nothing is gained by it, in Point of Happiness, but what must be the same, after 100 Years Usefulness, as one.

These



These Passages are clearly doctrinal, without any Parable; and there are various *New Testament* Parables, which (if we may argue from the incidental Parts of a Parable) have the same Import, as the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, in which there is a Train of arguing founded on this Notion. *Son remember, &c.* As to the Texts, which speak of the Consummation of the heavenly State, I have no Necessity of considering them, in this Argument; since it is not questioned, but that there is a great Reserve of Glory to be displayed in the Resurrection State.

On the Whole then, it seems plain, that, according to the *New Testament* Doctrine, they were in a State of Consciousness all along after Death; and that they might be capable of great Comfort in a separate State of Existence, which I hope hath been before proved to be agreeable to the Patriarchal Creed; tho' far short of the exquisite and seraphic Felicity of the Resurrection State, which is discovered with peculiar Clearness in the Christian Revelation.

III. I now proceed to consider those Texts, from which some Difficulty may be apprehended in this Question.

1. The famous Passage. *2 Tim. i. 10. That Life and Immortality are brought to light by the Gospel*, may, at first View, appear to militate with our Proposition, that *a future State was known before the Gospel*.—To the Difficulty arising hence I would reply, That this Text can have only three Senses put on it, *viz.* Either that the Doctrine of a future State of Consciousness, or Capacity of Happiness, was *first discovered* and made known to the World, by the Gospel. Or, (2.) That it was discovered with *greater Plainness*, and more satisfactory Evidence of the Truth of it, than before. Or, (3.) That it was a much more complete Discovery of the Resurrection and *ἀφθαρσία*, or incorruptible State of the Body, with many further Particulars of Felicity and Glory, unknown to the World before.

1. As to the first Sense of the Words, it cannot (I think) be admitted, without supposing the *New Testament* contradictory to itself. For in *Heb. xi.* many Old Testament Saints are represented to have lived and died in the Faith of this Article, that there is a future State; which would be a State of Happiness after Death; and yet they could scarcely think of any thing, but it's being a separate One.

Again; the heathen World had the Notion of a future State very familiar among them. And tho' I acknowledge that there were great Hesitations among their *learned* Men as to this Point; yet I am apt to think that it was more generally embraced among the *Vulgar*; for the uninquisitive Plebeians took it up from Tradition, and were not much concerned for the Arguments, on which their Ancestors believed it; but received it, in Confidence that they had good Reasons for it.

2. As



2. As to the second Sense, that a future State is taught *more explicitly*, and with greater Authority and Plainness in the Gospel, than before. I readily admit it as true; but I think it is not the whole Truth, here intended; nor the chief or principal Point, to which the Apostle referred.

3. Therefore he must refer to the Glory and Felicity of the Resurrection State. This was an Opening of the Prospect heaven-ward, enlarging and amplifying the View into the invisible World, and shewing them a State, which (to say the least) was less clearly known before.

A careful Perusal of this valedictory Epistle will manifest this Point, that the Apostle chiefly confined himself to this Subject, and had it always in his Eye that the *immortal Life*, brought to light in the Gospel, was the *Resurrection State*. In the *Exordium* of the Epistle, he, who was now near his own Departure, puts *Timothy* and the Christian Church in Mind of the peculiar Business of his Apostolic Work. *Ver. 1. Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, appointed by God, to declare the Promise of eternal Life, which Jesus Christ had himself made before.* Here the aged Apostle points to his peculiar Work, which was to publish the Christian Promises of a future State, with all its *glorious* Circumstances; and this not as Curiosity, but as the grand Motive to undertake all the Labours of Piety and Christian Duty. Then in *ver. 6.* he puts *Timothy* in Mind of the Obligation he was under, to exert all the eminent Gifts with which he was favoured, *το χαρισμα το θου*, in Discharge of the great Trust committed to him, of the Gospel Ministry, which was of the same Tenor with his own Apostolical One. For, says St. Paul, *God has not given us a Spirit of Timidity*, but a Spirit of Fortitude, Love and Prudence. Be not therefore ashamed of the Testimony of the Lord, *ver. 8.* For we are supported by the Power of God, who has *saved us, i. e.* called us to Holiness, by these grand Motives, the Hope of immortal Life, or the Glories of a Resurrection State. This, indeed, is not in Consideration of our Works, but in Pursuance of his own Purpose of Grace, thro' Christ, from the Beginning, which is now manifested by the Coming of Christ. For *he has abolished Death, viz.* by his own Resurrection, as a Pledge of the general One, *and brought Life immortal to light by the Gospel.* To enforce this Exhortation, St. Paul proceeds in his Account of his own Office, as ordained to teach this peculiar Doctrine to the *Gentiles, ver. 11.* and, says he, I am not ashamed of this Doctrine myself, being persuaded that God is able to preserve my *Depositum, i. e.* the Doctrine of a Resurrection to eternal Life, unto the great Day. He adds *Chap. ii. 2. These important Things, which thou hast heard of me, among many Witnesses, viz.* This glorious Christian Doctrine, *do thou commit to faithful Men, who may be able to teach others also.* Again, *ver. 8. Remember the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection, as it is the Pledge and Pattern of ours: For it is a faithful Saying. Ver. 11. If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.*—Further, *Verses 14, 16. Of these Things put them in Remembrance, and charge them to avoid unprofitable Disputes, and vain, profane Babblings,*



*Babblings, which will encrease to more Ungodliness.* This profane Scepticism will eat like a Gangrene. Of this we have had Instances in *Hymeneus and Philetus; who, having erred in this particular Point, have perverted the Faith of some others, saying that the Resurrection is past already.*—It seems pretty clear, from all these Passages taken together, that the Doctrine of the Resurrection, in all its Branches, was one capital and peculiar Point, which St. Paul, now going to be offered, had so much upon his Thoughts, in this farewell Epistle to the Christian World. And, indeed, it appears to me, that the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead, was the great Business of the Apostles, to teach to all the Churches, which they planted all the World over. And, as it would be much excepted to, they were particularly to be the Witnesses of that grand Fact, the Resurrection of *Christ*, for they all had afterwards seen him with their own Eyes; and his Resurrection might be considered as a Pledge and Security for all his Followers, on which they might depend, that they should finally share in the like glorious Event.

2. There is (*Secondly*) another Difficulty, which seems to arise from the Apostle's arguing, in several Passages, 1 Cor. xv. particularly the 18th, 19th, and 32d Verses, *If Christ be not raised, then they which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished. If, in this Life only, we have Hope in Christ, we are of all Men most miserable, or most to be pitied—What advantageth it me, if the Dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for To-morrow we die.*

St. Paul, in this Chapter, as in most of his Sermons, recorded in the Book of the *Acts*, and in most of his *Epistles*, inculcates the Doctrine of a future State. He doth this here, not only on Account of the Importance of this Doctrine, as a Point of which he would never have them to be unmindful, but also as there were some among them, who denied this grand *Peculiarity* of the Christian Faith, the Resurrection of the Dead. He, therefore, copiously teaches, in a doctrinal Way, this capital Article of Christianity, and then logically confutes the Errors that were broached among them, on this Head. But, for the clearer taking in the Force of his Reasoning, it will be necessary to enquire who the *Objectors* were, and what was the *Nature* of the *Objections*, which they advanced against this Doctrine. And, as they are not named, nor are the Arguments, they made use of, directly specified, we must gather both, as well as we can, from the Apostle's Reasoning against them.

1. It seems plain that they were professed Christians, who believed the well-attested *Fact* of Christ's own Resurrection, and yet denied the Resurrection of others, even his Disciples and Followers. The most probable Opinion seems to be that of *Chrysostom*.—That they were the *Philosophers*, who had turned from the gross Absurdities of *Paganism*, and yet were still tenaciously fond of their *Philosophical* Subtilties. It is probable that it was so, from the Situation of *Corinth*, being an eminent City of *Achaia*, where Learning greatly flourished, as well as Arts and Commerce. They might believe the plain Evidence of the *Fact*, that Christ was himself raised, on the express Testimony



mony of so many credible Witnesses, who personally knew him before his Death, and had seen and conversed with him after his Resurrection. They might not, like the *Athenian* Philosophers, *Acts* xvii. 32. mock at the Report. And yet they might think it a *Thing incredible that God should raise the Dead* in general, *Acts* xxvi. 3.—The Ancients inform us, that the *Philosophers* esteemed it impossible, that the Dead should be raised, whose Dust was scattered in undistinguishable Atoms, thro' Ten Thousand Changes, over the Face of the Earth.

And further, they thought it incongruous to desire it, since they thought the Body to be the Clog and Prison of the Soul, in which it was incarcerated, and as a Sepulchre in which it was half entombed, while alive in the Body.\* That they were such Christians, I think most probable, for the Reasons following. (*First*,) He charges some *among themselves* with denying the general Resurrection even of the Just. If *Christ's* Resurrection be preached and admitted to be true, *How say some among you, that there is no Resurrection?* ver. 12. He then argues with them thus, "If there be no Resurrection, then "is not Christ risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our Preaching vain, "then is your Faith vain,—then is our Hope vain; for they, that are dead in "Christ, are perished." Now this would be no Argument with Unbelievers, either *Jews* or *Pagans*, who denied the Resurrection of *Christ*; and so all that Christians inferred from it; and that the Christian Preaching and Faith were vain, they would readily allow, so that the Objectors were *Christians*.

But, if their Objection was either against the Possibility, or the Expediency, of the general Resurrection, he doth not directly answer them; but he proves a Resurrection to *have been* certain in one Instance, by their own Confession, and then the Possibility in other Instances would follow. As to the Expediency of the Resurrection, or Desirableness of being *freed* from the Body as a Clog, a Prison or a Sepulchre, tho' doubtless it should be allowed by *Christians*, that God was the only Judge what State was best for us, yet the Apostle seems to answer all that could be urged on that Head, by his describing a Resurrection-Body, in Comparison with this mortal One. It is in answer to that Question *with what Body do they come?* ver. 35. Tho' he rebukes their foolish Curiosity, yet he replies, it is not an animal, inglorious, corruptible, but a spiritual, glorious, incorruptible, or immortal Body, in ver. 42, 43, 44. and so might be no Impediment to the Soul, in it's Operations.—But further, as to these Passages, if Christ be not raised, then those, who are *dead in Christ, are perished*; if *we have our Hope in Christ in this Life only, we are of all Men most miserable*:—It must be observed that the *Apostle* doth not argue thus, That if Christ be not raised, then there is no future *separate* State, but thus, if Christ be not raised, then there is no *Resurrection* State, *i. e.* no glorious heavenly State, such as Christians are instructed to expect and hope for. If Christ's Resurrection was an Imposture, then

\* *Grove's Sermon*, Vol. III. p. 388.



there was not a Pledge given of our Resurrection, as we teach that there was, and if he did rise again, he could not be the *First-fruits*, if there was to be no following Harvest; he could not be the *First-born from the dead*, if there were to be no other Children of the Resurrection, as we always preach, Col. i. 18. And if it be so, then those who are dead in the Defence or Profession of the Christian Faith, are *lost* comparatively, that is, are great Losers by all their Sufferings for Christianity. They could then have no other Hopes, as to a future State, but those common ones, which other Men thought they had; whereas Christians had the peculiar Hopes of the glorious Resurrection State, by which they were animated in all their Christian Sufferings. He doth not here alledge, that all, who were Strangers to the Doctrine of the Resurrection, were *perished*, Patriarchs, Jews, or even Pagans; but that Christians, who, by the Tenor of the Gospel-preaching, were raised to these *peculiar* Hopes, were *lost*, as to all these Hopes, if there was no Resurrection. And *lost* they were, in very strong Propriety, if all these heavenly Hopes must vanish.

4. As, in the Progress of Prophecy, the Benefits God designed to impart to the World, by his Son, were gradually disclosed, so in the Fulness of Time, some, perhaps, unsuspected Secrets of divine Love shone forth, concerning a future State; which *Christ* himself was both to teach and exemplify: This was not, indeed, so much as to the *Being* of a future State, as a more explicit Account of the *Nature* of it, and some glorious Circumstances of that State, in the Resurrection of the Body. Life and Immortality were brought to light in the Gospel.—In this Chapter, St. *Paul* takes up the Subject from the Beginning, to set the whole Doctrine of the Loss and Repair, by *Adam* and *Christ*, in one View, and to open, as it were, the *Rationale* of the Doctrine of the Resurrection; shewing it to be the Cure of an Evil brought in by *Adam*. He takes Occasion, from speaking of one, to speak fully of the other also, according to the manifest Connection between them. 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. *Since by Man came Death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead. As in ADAM all die, so in CHRIST shall all be made alive.* It now came to appear, that all, that was lost by *Adam*, was to be finally restored by *Christ*; and that Life was to take Place in the same Extent, that Death had done before. It was now made manifest, not only that Man might be capable of some Share in God's Favour after Death, which might have been gathered before, from those original Revelations, in the first Period of Prophecy; but also, that there should be a final Revival to such a *Life*, as they thought had been entirely *lost*, that of a Re-union to their Bodies. I entirely concur with my learned Friend Mr. *Taylor*; \* “ From this Place we cannot “ conclude, that any other Evil, or Death, came upon Mankind, in Con- “ sequence of *Adam's* first Transgression, besides that *Death*, from which “ Mankind shall be delivered at the Resurrection; *whatever that Death be.*”

To

\* Script. Doctr. of Original Sin. p. 25.



To establish the Christian Hopes in this glorious Event, St. Paul lays down this Position, as owned by those, against whom he argueth. *Now is Christ risen from the Dead, and become the First-fruits of them that slept.* The First-fruits of a glorious following Harvest; the Pledge and Pattern in his own Person, of the general Resurrection. Thus Mr. Taylor explains it, p. 23. and, as I think, very justly.

*Adam* and *Christ* are here compared. *Adam* was made in the Image of God; and yet, as he sinned, so he died; and was exhibited as an Instance and Pattern of dying; and tho' *Christ* was *the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, and absolutely sinless, yet he died as our Mediator and Redeemer, surely agreeable to the Pattern of *Adam's* dying. But can we think, that the divine *Logos* died in such a Sense, as to become an unconscious, insensible, unactive Being, while the Body was in the Grave? *Christ* was also the *First-fruits*, the Pledge and Pattern of the *Resurrection*, as *Adam* was of *dying*; but could *Christ* be an Instance or Pattern of the Re-union of the Body to an unconscious, insensible, unactive Spirit, when this Re-union was to the divine *Logos*? It seems very harsh to suppose it. Our Lord's Resurrection was therefore an Instance and Pattern and First-fruits of a Re-union of a *Body* to a *Mind* existing after Death, and before that Re-union, in a separate State of unextinguished Consciousness, and then there is nothing harsh or difficult in the Doctrine.

III. I further add, that an Union to a Body may be reasonably supposed the most natural State of Perfection for a human Soul. This will appear highly probable, if we consider, the Condition in which it was created at first. The intermediate State of it's Separation from the Body. And the State, to which, by *Christ*, we are finally to be restored.

I. If we consider the Condition, *in which* God placed the human Soul, immediately upon it's Creation; we find it was in an embodied State. God made Man's Body of the Dust of the Ground, and then breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and he became a *living Soul*, bearing the Stamp and Impression of God's Image; and God pronounced this Part of his Work, as well as the rest, *very good*. The thinking Being was so united to the exquisite, bodily Machine, which God had prepared for it, that it was a fit Instrument for the Soul to make use of, in all the Operations at that Time necessary; and, by Virtue of that amazing, tho' inexplicable Connection, the Body became a Mean of Perception, as to every Pleasure, which the Soul had any need of, for true Happiness. An excellent Author speaks fully to this Point, as follows: " From *Revelation*, we know this was the original or primitive  
" State of the Soul; nor can we prove it's Pre-existence, from *Reason*; and,  
" since this was it's *first* Manner of Existence, I mean *embodied*, and  
" will be it's *last*, we have sufficient Ground to conclude, that there is  
" somewhat in the Nature of a human Soul, which requires it's being cloath-



“ ed with *Matter*, in order to it's exerting all it's Powers to the greatest Advantage, and enjoying it's entire Happiness. That is, in short, that it may be in it's most perfect State.” And the same learned Author goes on, “ I express myself thus, because I do not imagine the Soul is so dependent on the Body, as not to be able to think and act at all without it's Assistance. 'Tis past Doubt with me, both by Evidence from Reason and Scripture, that the Soul doth not sleep away all the Time, betwixt Death and the Resurrection ; but hath the Use of it's Faculties, in it's separate State ; and more free and enlarged too, than in this gross terrestrial Body, and is either happy or miserable, according to it's prevailing Temper and Character, at the Time of it's leaving the Body. However, *says he*, still this doth not hinder, but the most perfect State of the human Soul may be, Union with a Body, fitted up for it, and as exactly suited to it's Nature and Operations, as it can possibly be.”\*

Again, (*Secondly*) as to the State of the Soul, in it's Separation from the Body ; this was not an Improvement of it's Condition. This Alteration was brought on by Sin, and was inflicted on the Transgressors, under the Notion of *Evil*, even expressly, as a Punishment, upon the Forfeiture of a Privilege ; from whence we must conclude that the former State of Union to the Body, was a better State than the Dis-union, which was threatened. *Sin* introduced *Death*, or the Separation of Soul and Body ; this Separation was properly Suffering ; and therefore it must clearly follow that the human Soul was reduced to a Manner of existing, less perfect, than that in which God placed it, immediately after it's Creation. The State of Innocency was embodied, the State of Guilt was disembodied.—We see then, that the Notion, which prevailed among the Philosophers, was far from being a just One, that the Body, in it's proper Nature, is the Prison of the Soul ; and it was owing to their Ignorance of the original and primitive State of Mankind. *Celsus's* Remark, on the Christian Doctrine of the Resurrection, was neither Wit, nor Reasoning, but meer injudicious Rant, *viz.* “ The Hope of the Resurrection of the Flesh is the Hope of Worms ; a filthy, an abominable, an impossible Thing, which God neither *will*, nor *can* do.”†

Indeed, as the Body is now a Sink of Diseases, and the Seat of Pains, various and exquisite, and of numberless Wants, which may often encumber and embarrass the Mind, in it's Operations, this might lead them into that Opinion. But we, who know by *Revelation*, *what* it was at *first*, and *how* this Change was introduced, may apprehend *Adam's* Condition in Innocency to have been altogether as good and happy, as that of separate Spirits before the Resurrection ; and yet at the same Time, may readily allow that the separate State of the Saints may unspeakably transcend *their* Life in this World, in a pained diseased Body, surrounded with an Army of Sorrows, Afflictions, and Temptations without, and Corruptions and entangling Propensities within.

If

\* See *Grove's Sermon*. Vol. III. p. 389.† *Spencer, Orig. Lib.* v. p. 240.



If we (*Thirdly*) consider the State to which by Christ we are finally to be restored, this must demonstrate that an embodied State, or an Union to some Kind of material Organs, is the most perfect Manner of Existence for a human Soul. If there are other Spirits of such a Nature as not to require this *Nexus* with Matter, in order to the Perfection of their Operations and their Happiness, yet the past and future Dealings of the all-wise God with Mankind, shew that the *human Soul* is of such a Nature, as to require this Alliance with *Matter*, for the Perfection of it's Operations and Enjoyments. God made us for this Union at first, the Separation was inflicted as a Punishment, and the restoring this Union again, is the most stupendous Instance of divine Love in *Christ*. Now it is not consistent with our honourable Notions of the Deity, to suppose that he would establish so wonderful a *Nexus*, betwixt Matter and Spirit at first, or so astonishingly repair it again, unless it were necessary, or the *very best* for us upon the whole. May we not then conclude that Union to Body is the most perfect State for the Souls of Men, and the grand *aim* of human Excellence?

Thus the History of Man's Loss, by the *Fall*, is connected with the Prophecy of his complete Recovery and Restoration by the *Resurrection*; whereby we have set before us, in one View, the two distant Extremes of all God's Dispensations towards our Nature.

#### C H A P. IV.

##### *Tradition to the Flood.*

**I** AM now to consider the Means of the Conveyance of this Knowledge from *Adam*, who was in the first Possession of it, to the End of the Antediluvian World.

I have explained at large the Materials of their Religious Knowledge, as to the Facts they had to reason from, and the System of the Patriarchal Religion, which they might deduce from these Premises.

As to the Conveyance of this Knowledge downward; all the Antediluvian Patriarchs, could easily attain a sufficient Acquaintance with all the original Facts, by indubitable Tradition from *Adam*, who was an Eye and Ear-witness of them.

All the Doubts that can arise on this Subject must be some of these following:

Either, (1.) That *Adam* would not communicate this Knowledge to his Children. Or, (2.) That they would drop it afterwards, and not impart it to their Children, or to each other. Or, (3.) That they would corrupt it and deprave it with Fable. So that it would be lost before the Deluge came.

I. As



I. As to the first of these Doubts, that *Adam* would not communicate this original Knowledge to his Children; there can be little Foundation for that Apprehension, in the Nature of Things.

1. I have already proved that there are certain common Principles and Passions of human Nature, which do actually prevail among all Mankind, inclining them to impart their Knowledge to each other. But there is particularly a natural Affection in Parents towards their Offspring, which constrains them to instruct their Children in whatever they apprehend to be good and useful for them. And there can be no Reason assigned to suspect, that our first Parents were deficient in natural Affections.

Again; all Parents have, in general, nearly *an equal* Tenderneſs and Affection, for all their Children alike, in their Infancy. And from this common Principle of human Nature, all the Children of our first Parents would have *an equal* Care taken of them in their Education. So that there would be no great Difference in the Knowledge of the ſeveral younger Generations, except what might ariſe from the Difference of their own Parts and Diligence, their Capacity and Application for their ſeveral Improvements. I ſee no Ground to ſuſpect them of Partiality.

2. We have no Ground to imagine that our first Parents could forget Things ſo exceeding remarkable, as thoſe Events were, upon which their Sentiments about *Religion* were founded. We find no Inſtances among their Poſterity, of Perſons, with a Soundneſs of Mind, forgetting their own chief Affairs and Tranſactions, either as to their Doings or Sufferings. Such as their building a City or Houſe; their Change of their Country, either by Compulſion or Choice; their getting, or inheriting, or loſing an Eſtate; their Marriages, or their Families. So that, by Parity of Reaſon, *Adam* could not forget his Innocency or his Fall, his being in Paradife, or his Expulſion from it; the Reaſons of that Change, or the Conſequences of it.

3. The Care of educating Children would come on ſo ſoon after the Events, that they muſt all of them have been very recent, and therefore very perfect in their Memories. Our first Parents being created in a State of Maturity, it is rational to ſuppoſe that they would ſoon have Children, who would have an Education beſtowed on them, as ſoon as they were capable of it.

*Cain*, in the Courſe of Nature, might be capable of Inſtruction in a few Years after his Birth, which could not probably be many Years after their being placed in, and their Expulſion from Paradife; therefore they could not forget all theſe Things, during the Education of their first Children.

I own indeed, that, when their youngſt Children were to be educated, the original Facts would be at a conſiderable Diſtance in Point of Time; but, as we may reaſonably ſuppoſe that they had an *equal* Affection for all their Children, ſo they would be *conſtantly repeating* theſe original Facts to every Child in it's Education; and this conſtant Repetition of them, as their Infant Offspring



spring stood in need of it, would preserve them fresh in their own Memories to the last, and make them familiar to all their Children. If we suppose *Adam* to have had Children to 600, or 700 Years of Age, I do not perceive any Thing unnatural in the Supposition, at that Season of extraordinary Longevity. *Noah* had certainly three Sons after he was 500 Years old; and why might not *Adam* have Children to 6, or 700, which was not much above two Thirds of his Life-time, which is no unnatural Proportion to the Length of our Lives, in any Age, for having Children. If 70 be reckoned now the ordinary Life of Man,  $46\frac{2}{3}$  Years will be two Thirds of that Life, and most healthy Persons have Children at the Age of 46, therefore *Adam* might at 700.

Now this continued Course of Education would keep the original Facts fresh in the Memory of our first Parents to the last; and so those Children, which were born when *Adam* was 6, or 700 Years old, would have much the same Sort of Education as *Cain*, *Abel* or *Seth*.

II. Another Question may arise, *viz.* whether *Adam's* Posterity would not be like to drop this Knowledge, when they had received it from him? But I think there is little Ground to fear this Inconvenience, at least for a considerable Time.

1. I have proved under a former Head, that there is a natural Disposition in Mankind, which inclines all Men to a mutual Communication, and which impels them both to seek and to give Pleasure, in this Method of Discourse and Conversation, and in mutually gratifying a Curiosity common to all. That, in which all Parties have a Pleasure, will not be like to be dropped by any, till something, which affords each a greater Pleasure, succeeds in its Place.

From this general Principle of our Nature we may then conclude, that *Adam's* Posterity would be inclined from the Beginning, to entertain each other with such Knowledge as they had. We find this sociable Temper prevailing in our own Days, and cannot reasonably doubt but it prevailed in those more early Ones.

2. The World was so young, when *Cain*, *Abel*, and those, who were born nearest to them, became capable of Conversation, that they could have little else to converse about, besides those original Events. If they conversed with their Parents, it would be natural to speak of such Things as they knew; or further to enquire into Things unknown, for more Information; but *these Things* must be the Theme and Subject still. If they had a Taste parallel to an *historical* One, they had no *past* Events to discourse of, but the Creation, the State of Innocency, the Fall, the Expulsion from Paradise, and the like. If they would talk *philosophically*, these Things must still be the Subject of their Examination, the Nature of the Heavens or the Earth, the Nature and  
Uses



Uses of Animals, the Differences betwixt Brutes and Man; but all these Enquiries must lead their Thoughts to the History of the Creation.

If they conversed with each other, *Cain* and *Abel*, or with their younger Brothers and Sisters, in the Dawn of Reason, or with their own Wives and Children, in the first Marriages; there must be such a Scarcity of other Subjects, that a Day could hardly pass for many Years, without some Conversation on Paradise and its Delights, the Barrenness of the common World, into which they were driven; the fatal Arts of the great Deceiver, and the sad Consequences of his Success. And, probably, the heavenly Guard, at the Gates of Paradise, would be visible to them, which would be a constant, sensible Memorial, and awful Proof of the Truth of the primitive History of the Fall, to all who settled near it.

If they should fall into the Temper of looking before them, and prying into Futurity, all the Conjectures which they could make, about future Events, as to what should be like to befall them in their greatest Concerns, must be founded on the first *Prophecies*; such as the Certainty of their own Death, the Victory of the Seed of the Woman over the Serpent, the Barrenness of the Ground, and the laborious Tillage of it, to which they were condemned. They had nothing to guide them in this Kind of Enquiry, or Investigation of future Events, but these Intimations, which were given them after the Fall. So that these original Discoveries must be the Subject of their various Conferences in every View, Historical, Philosophical, or Oeconomical, past, present, or to come.

3. When these great Events, which were almost all they had to talk of, came to be the frequent Subjects of Conversation, among the Brothers and Sisters of the first Family, they could not commonly be mentioned without various Observations and Reflections upon them; there would arise Variety of Reasoning about them, according to the different Genius and Temper of the Speakers. Perhaps *Cain* and *Abel* might make different Observations on these Facts. But then the repeating Facts would make them more and more familiar; and Conversation might renew in their Memories, those Doctrines and Instructions which *Adam* had inculcated in the Course of their Education.

4. Every *Sabbath*, which they may be supposed to celebrate in its weekly Return; every Sacrifice which was offered, and every other publick Act of *Religion*, would naturally tend to refresh their Memories with a Sense of the Grounds and Reasons of those Solemnities. These were striking Things, and could not but set them upon thinking; they would both excite them to Meditations on Things known, and stir them up to new Enquiries.

If we may then suppose that Mankind, at that Time, were no worse than they commonly are now, this Stock of Knowledge, which they had by their Education, could not be lost; but on the contrary would be daily augmenting and improving, by their own Reasoning and Conversation upon it; and their  
uniting



uniting in religious Duties, especially while the Eye-witnesses of the original Facts were among them. Tho' some might be careless then, as some are now, others might be careful, inquisitive and studious then, as we find it now. If *Cain* might be careless in his Enquiries, or loose in his Remarks, *Abel* was a Person of a different Character, serious in both. And, when they had so few Materials of Knowledge, either to meditate or discourse upon, those few would be easily preserved from Curiosity, even when they were not taken Care of, from a religious Principle. There are many Persons, in every Age, who are not religious, who yet treasure up a large Stock of Religious Knowledge; and Parents, who do not reverence Religion themselves, are frequently observed to desire that their Children should be acquainted with it.

So that, by the Joint-Influence of the Principle of Religion, and that of Curiosity, the original Truths, both as to Facts and Doctrines, would very probably be preserved. And all the Disputes, which might arise about the Doctrines or Inferences from the Facts, would fix the Facts deeper in their Memories, and be apt to make the Doctrines or Articles of their Faith more familiar to them. And any Incredulity, as to the Facts, might be easily decided by an Appeal to our first Parents.

III. A third Question may be raised, "Whether these original Facts and Doctrines would not soon be corrupted by *Fables*; and so the Patriarchal Religion be speedily lost."

To this Difficulty I reply, That it seems almost impossible that such a Corruption should generally prevail, before the *Flood*; and that therefore the Patriarchal Religion would be maintained by Tradition, pretty perfect to that Time, *i. e.* as to the Knowledge of it.

1. They lived to so great an Age, that there could be very little Danger of any considerable Misrepresentations of the Facts taking Place, before the *Deluge*.

Our first Parents themselves might probably have Children till the sixth or seventh hundred Year of their Age. And therefore there might be young Persons educated in the Knowledge of the genuine, original Truths, by the Eye and Ear-witnesses of them, thro' six or seven Centuries, some of which might be alive to the very Time of the *Deluge*.

2. Again; if any considerable Mistakes, or Corruptions, had crept into the History of these original Events, our first Parents were alive, to be appealed to, for rectifying them, for near 1000 Years. So that all, that lived any thing near the Place of *Adam's* Residence, might have frequently renewed Informations of the original Truths. It may be further observed, that *Seth* might have Children educated by him till the ninth Century, and every succeeding Patriarch, except *Enoch*, might have still young Persons educated by themselves, almost thro' every Age of the Antediluvian World; these



would be all along mixing with those of more profligate Education, and so would be like to keep the Primitive Truths, pretty entire, notwithstanding any Endeavours of the other to deprave and corrupt them, or any Negligence about them.

3. As to the Doctrines grounded upon, or inferred from, those Facts, any Person of common Capacity might deduce them all himself, could they have been lost; which however it is by no Means reasonable to suppose, while *Adam* himself was alive, and those Children who were educated by him; and some of the younger Sort might be alive to the very Year of the *Deluge*, as we before remarked.

4. But, if it is further objected here, that tho', according to this Account, it may be allowed, that they *might*, if they *would*, have preserved these original Truths and Doctrines, yet they were so wicked, that it is not probable they *would* do it.

To this Objection I reply, That many of the Patriarchs, which are mentioned by *Moses*, were eminently good Men, as *Abel*, and *Enoch*, and *Noah*. And we have no Occasion to carry it any further than the good Men, particularly *Noah*, who was the Monitor of the old World, and the Fountain of the Tradition to the new one. The good Men *would* cultivate this Kind of Knowledge, and the bad *might* do it if they would.

Besides, there are now, and (no doubt) in parallel Circumstances always were, many bad Men, with a sufficient Knowledge of Religion. These original Facts were so few, and most of the Inferences from them so plain, that they could not well be ignorant of them, and yet it might be no more than barren Speculation. Men's Lusts have often been too hard for their Convictions in every Age; and yet they have had those very Convictions.

## S E C T. I.

*On what is historically clear, as to the Line of Succession of the Patriarchs.*

**I** Proceed now to consider what is historically clear, as to the Line of Conveyance of Tradition, from *Adam* to *Noah*, by the Hebrew Antiquary, *Moses*.

It is plain by the Genealogy in *Gen. v.* that all the Antediluvian Patriarchs, mentioned by *Moses*, were arrived at Manhood, except *Noah*, and perhaps *Lamech*, before *Adam's* Death.

The



# CHIEFLY RELIGIOUS.

67

The following Table of the Years of the World, in which they were severally born, and in which they died, exhibits a clear Account of this Succession.

BORN Anno Mundi. DIED Anno Mundi.

Adam	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	930
Seth	-	-	-	130	-	-	-	1042
Enos	-	-	-	235	-	-	-	1140
Cainan	-	-	-	325	-	-	-	1235
Mabalaleel	-	-	-	395	-	-	-	1290
Jared	-	-	-	460	-	-	-	1422
Enoch	-	-	-	622	-	-	-	987
Metbuselab	-	-	-	687	-	-	-	1656
Lamech	-	-	-	874	-	-	-	1651
Noah	-	-	-	1056	-	-	-	2006

How long the intermediate Patriarchs were each of them contemporary with Adam the first, and Noah the last, in this Series of Line of Succession, appears from the following Table.

## THEY LIVED

With ADAM.

With NOAH.

Lamech	-	-	56 Years.	-	-	-	595 Years.
Metbuselab	-	-	243	-	-	-	600
Enoch	-	-	365	-	-	-	
Jared	-	-	470	-	-	-	366
Mabalaleel	-	-	535	-	-	-	234
Cainan	-	-	605	-	-	-	179
Enos	-	-	695	-	-	-	84
Seth	-	-	800	-	-	-	dead at Noah's Birth.

From this Table it is obvious, that all the intermediate Patriarchs, betwixt Adam and Noah, lived so long with each of them, that Adam could not be too old, nor Noah too young to impart or to receive the Informations concerning the primitive State of human Nature.

Metbuselab lived with Adam, many Years after he himself was at full Maturity, so as to be capable of making judicious Enquiries; and many Years before Adam could be supposed to be decayed by Years, so that Adam could be capable of giving judicious Answers, with all proper Acuteness and Perfection



tion of Memory, to the Enquiries of *Metuseph*. And he lived 600 Years with *Noah*, so that he could communicate all he got from *Adam*.

*Jared* and *Mabalaleel* lived both with *Adam* and *Noah*, in each of their Prime and Vigour of Nature, Judgment and Memory; with all the Advantages of perfect Contemporaries with both. *Adam* was in all his Vigour to instruct and relate, and *Noah* in a full Maturity and Prime of Reason to take in, whatever they related and taught as from *Adam*.

But then further, they were not only Contemporaries, so as that all of them lived together, but they were near Relations, - Fathers and Sons, thro' the whole Succession; so that they must every one of them greatly interest themselves in this important Story, which each of them had from their own Father.

Again; it seems to me that the *Mosaic* Line from *Seth* to *Noah* was chiefly, if not wholly, by the eldest Sons, who might settle near the Place of *Adam*'s ordinary Residence, and so might, each of them, enjoy a frequent and free Conversation with him, to the Day of his Death; and with each other, as long as they severally lived afterwards.

This View of the regular Series of Succession in the ancient Patriarchs, who by their Longevity were all a Sort of Contemporaries, and by their being such near Relations, might, probably, have a Vicinity of Habitation, will greatly illustrate the Perfection of their Knowledge of all Things, from the Beginning of the World.

The original Facts must descend to them, even to *Noah* himself, unadulterated with *Fable*. And, if any Errors mixed with the Truths as to the Doctrines and Opinions deduced from these Facts, they all had their own Reason to make use of, for Detection of those Errors, and the Confutation of the Fallacies, which ill designing Men might make use of, in their Support.

There might, no doubt, be Persons of Latitudinary, Sceptical Principles then, as well as now. Objectors to the Revelations made to *Adam*, as well as those made to *Moses* or *Paul*. But they could have no great Success against those Believers, who heard all that they believed, which themselves did not see, from *Adam*, who did see and hear, and feel all he reported.

Upon the whole then, there must have been, through all the Antediluvian Ages, tho' I do not say that there was in all Places, a Competency of Religious Knowledge, to have guided and excited them to the Practice of all genuine Piety, and substantial, solid Virtue. That there might be so, the Course of this Argument proves; and that there was so, at least in some Places, *Noah*'s own Preaching, and Practice was a Demonstration.

MAN, even after the Fall, was a noble Creature. And, with such Encouragements and Helps as God graciously afforded him, such a System of Articles of Faith, such a Ritual of Worship and Directory of Devotion, and such a masculine Plan of *Morals*, as might have been gathered out of all these Premises; they



they might have maintained not only a great *Decorum*, but a manly, noble Course of rational Piety and true Goodness. God did not, in all this Period, leave himself without Witnesses, &c.

## S E C T. II.

*On Longevity of the Antediluvians.*

**I** AM not sensible of any other Objection against this Account I have given of the Perfection of Tradition in the first World, except what may be made to the Calculations of Time.

Here it may be alledged, 1. That it was not computed by Years of such Dimensions as are now made use of, *i. e.* by solar Years, measured by an annual Revolution of the Sun. Or, 2. That if it be so, then the whole History is incredible.

I. As to the first Objection, I offer the following Reply, *viz.* That all the common Divisions of Time are plainly set down and enumerated, as Things well known, when the Duration of the general Deluge was calculated, from the Beginning of it to the End.

In this short and only genuine History of the Deluge, we have express Mention of Days, Months and Years. And tho' Weeks are not named, yet the Distinction of the Period of seven Days is as expressly mentioned as any of the other, as if that had been a remarkable Period also, as well known as the other.

It is I think obvious, that all these Measures of Time, except one, were taken from the apparent Motions of the heavenly Bodies. The diurnal, apparent Revolution of the Sun, was the Measure of a Day and Night. The lunar Revolution was the Original of distinguishing Time into Months. The annual solar Revolution was the Occasion of distinguishing Time into Years. And tho' they might take the Phases of the Moon, for the Ground of dividing a Month into four Weeks, yet it seems the most probable that the Distinction of Time into Weeks might be owing to the Institution of the Sabbath, or seventh successive Day, for pious Rest.

All these Astronomical Foundations for distinguishing Time, they had to direct them very early. That of a Week they had by Revelation, that of a Month by the Motion of the Moon, and that of a Year, after the End of the first Year of the World, or first solar annual Revolution, by that Motion of the Sun. And tho' they might not be sufficiently apprized of the Certainty and Regularity of the solar Year, and it's exact Dimensions at first, yet,



yet, methinks, they could not be at a great Loss, after a few annual, solar Revolutions.

I acknowledge, indeed, that it is very probable, that *Moses* received the Knowledge of the exact Dimensions of the Lives of the Antediluvian Patriarchs from Revelation, (since it cannot be well conceived how Records could be kept of those different Lengths of their Lives before writing so perfectly)\* yet it is highly probable that they made use of these several Motions, by which to compute and calculate Time, and had them pretty regular in their own Days.

1. *Moses* in the History of the Creation, tells us, that God expressly declared these special Uses of the heavenly Luminaries among others. *Gen. i. 14. And God said let there be Lights in the Firmament of Heaven, to divide the Day from the Night, and let them be for Signs and for Seasons, and for Days and Years.*

Now, as I suppose, that an History of the Creation was given to *Adam*, as full at least, as that which is given to *us* in the Book of *Genesis*; because it was as necessary that *he* should know that great Transaction, as that *we* should know it; and impossible that he should find it out, by any Sagacity of his own, any more than we should find it out by ours. I say, on these Considerations, it is likely that he had a History of the Creation; and if so, he was by Revelation, or by angelic Ministry, informed of this particular End and Use of the heavenly Bodies, and their Motions, and therefore would set himself to make this use of them, to measure and compute the Succession of Time by them. The Measure of a Day and Month was easy; and that of a Year, by the annual Revolution of the Sun, would in some Years, become easy too. The several Patriarchs lived probably, pretty much in one Place, for we know *Cain* built a City for his Residence. *Gen. iv. 16, 17.* And, as the Patriarchs from *Seth* to *Noah*, were probably most of them the eldest Sons, so they lived in the same Country, and could not but remark where the Sun appeared in the longest, and where in the shortest Day; and whereabouts the Equinoxes; if there was an ecliptic Motion, then it is plain they might have a Ground Observation of these Appearances, if they had not an astronomical one. Those who know mountainous Countries, can tell very near, behind what Mountain the Sun rises, on the longest Day, and which on the shortest, by annual Observations.

2. Again, the Return of the Seasons would indicate something of a regular Succession of Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. They would find that Spring always came before Autumn, in certain regular Succession, and that it depended

\* God promised 120 Years Space of Patience, and doubtless *Noah* could compute that Time. *Gen. vi. 3.* And as to the Length of the Lives of the Postdiluvian Fathers, it could be known to *Moses* no other Way; since they were all alive long after the Dispersion, and probably never saw any of *Peleg's* Line, from whom *Abraham* descended afterwards. So that the Account of the Time of their Death, could be no Part of the Tradition, in the *Abrahamic* Family.



depended on the Motions of the Sun, and that these came every Year, always as the Sun rose about, or near, such a Mountain, or remarkable Place, in their own View, at the Places where they lived.

A learned Author \* speaks fully to this Purpose, "The Moon as performing her Revolutions more frequently than the Sun, offered Mankind the first Method of Computation. But as it must be very soon observed, that these lunar Years, came about too often, to be of any great Service in ascertaining the larger Portions of Duration, and in distinguishing the various Seasons of Summer and Winter, Spring and Autumn, a little Reflection would soon lead them to look out for a longer and more comprehensive Measure of Time. Nor was it possible for them long to be at a Loss or Difficulty in this Respect, when the great Luminary, that was continually rolling over their Heads, so visibly offered itself to their Notice for this Purpose. He goes on,——As the Revolution of the Sun from the longest or shortest Day, till it returned again to the same Point, or *Tropic*, was the most obvious and remarkable Object of their Senses, and must be their constant Guide and Monitor in improving, sowing, and planting, Nature itself must dictate to them to observe the Number of Days and Nights, and even the lunar Years, or Moons, themselves, that were included within that greater Period, or Revolution. And, as this might be done by every Shepherd, or Husbandman, without the least Help of Astronomy, or Knowledge of the heavenly Signs, it is impossible but that their Interest as well as Curiosity must prompt them to it; it is impossible but the true Quantity of the Year must have been nearly known, even in the most early Ages of Mankind."

3. But further; there are Computations of all their Times in little Periods, which could not burden their Memories. Can we think that *Shem* could not reckon two Years from the Flood to *Arphaxad's* Birth, or that *Arphaxad* could not reckon 30 Years to the Birth of *Salah*, and so on, in every Succession for so few Years? Can we think that *Terah* could not remember what Age he was, at the Dispersion, when he left *Noah*; or when he had his Son *Haran*, and afterwards his Son *Abraham*? Can we imagine that *Abraham* knew not what Age he was when he left *Charan*, to go to *Canaan*; or how old he was when *Isaac* was promised; or that he knew not what Age *Isaac* was, when he married; or when *Esau* and *Jacob* were born? Or, finally, Can we question whether *Jacob* knew his own Age, when he stood before *Pharoah*? Surely this was a Piece of Knowledge, very familiarly common in that Age; † when *Pharoah* asked *Jacob* how old he was? It was not a puzzling Question to try his Skill in Astronomy; but merely on Account of his Appearance, as a very aged Person. And it appears, by *Jacob's* Answer, that this was a Point of Knowledge familiar among his Ancestors; he had not attained to the Age of his Fathers, which must carry it further than *Isaac* and *Abraham*; and, probably, he might refer to the Longevity of

\* Squire. *Def. of Greek Chro.* p. 37, 38.

† Gen. xlvii. 8, 9.



of many Generations backward, because he calls his own Days *few* compared with theirs.

From all these Observations, I think we may conclude that the Antediluvian Patriarchs had a pretty regular Measure of Time, even the Motions of the heavenly Bodies, which they understood and made use of.

4. The Duration of the Deluge is computed by Days, Months and Years, of certain determinate Dimensions, and compared with the Reckoning of the Antediluvians.

The Year of the Flood was the six hundredth Year of the Life of the Patriarch *Noah*.\* This Year was divided into Months; for the Flood began in the six hundredth Year of *Noah's* Life, in the second Month. The Months were divided into a certain Number of Days; for in the six hundredth Year, in the second Month, on the seventeenth Day of the Month, the Fountains of the great Deep were broken up, and the Windows of Heaven were opened. It rained forty Days before the Ark floated, and the Flood prevailed one hundred and fifty Days, before it rested on the Mountains of *Ararat*. This was in the seventh Month, on the seventeenth Day of the Month. And this Passage clearly determines the Length of their Months, to be of thirty Days. It begun in the second Month, the seventeenth Day, and rested the seventh Month, seventeenth Day, and  $5 \times 30 = 150$ .

The Year certainly contained ten Months, for *Gen. viii. 5.* the Waters decreased continually from their Beginning to abate, unto the tenth Month, on the first Day of which the Tops of the Mountains were seen. I confess we meet not with any direct Mention of the eleventh and twelfth Months. But so much Time would be necessary for the draining the Earth, that it could scarce be dry enough for the going out of the Ark, on the second Month the 27th Day, unless we suppose the Year to have consisted of twelve Months.

The Probability of the Length of their Year, being twelve Months, will appear not only on Account of it's corresponding to one solar Revolution, in it's annual Orbit, but from the History itself.

	Days.
Second Month, 17th Day, Flood begun.	} 5 Months $\times$ 30 = 150
Seventh Month, 17th Day, Ark rested.	
Tenth Month, 1st Day, the Mountain Tops seen. Therefore, before they were seen, there passed 13 Days of the 7th Month, and the whole 8th and 9th Months.	} 73
Eleventh Month, 10th Day, the Raven sent out; for it was 40 Days.	
Seventeenth Day the Dove sent out.	.7
Twenty-fourth Day, Dove sent again, but returned not.	7
From this 24th Day, of the 11th Month, to the End of the 12th Month, he staid without further Intelligence, while the Earth was draining. $30 \times 6 =$	} 36
	In

\* *Gen. vii. 11.*



In the 601st Year, 1st Month, 1st Day, the Ark uncovered. From this Time to the 2d Month, 27th Day, the Earth drained, and he } 57  
 went out of the Ark by divine Command.

370

So that the Duration of the Flood was 370 Days, from going in to coming out, or 12 Months 10 Days.

Now from this it is evident, that the six hundredth Year of *Noah's* Life, consisted of 12 Months, each Month consisting of 30 Days, that is  $12 \times 30 = 360$  Days. But these 600 Years of *Noah's* Life, before the Flood, were of the same Dimension with the Years of *Adam*, of which he lived 930; or those of *Methuselah*, of which he lived 969, and so of all the rest of the Antediluvian Fathers.

2. The Years, that are made use of, by *Moses*, in computing the Length of the Lives of the Antediluvian Patriarchs, in the 5th Chapter of *Genesis*, are of the same Dimensions, or the same Sort of Years, with those made use of in computing the Lives of the Postdiluvians; because the Years of *Noah* and *Shem* are expressly reckoned in both the Genealogies, and continued from one to the other. *Noah* was 600 Years old at the Flood, he lived 350 Years after it, and his whole Age was 950 Years.\* They counted the same Sort of Years before and after the Flood, which added together made up this Sum.

*Shem* was 100 Years old, two Years after the Flood, or in the second Year after it, at the Birth of *Arphaxad*, of which Sum 98 were the Years he lived before the Flood, and the two were Postdiluvian Years. He lived in all 600 Years, 98 of Antediluvian, and 502 of Postdiluvian Years.

I may add, in order to a regular View of the Old Testament Chronology, that *Shem's* Years were of the same Dimension, or the same Sort of Years with those of which *Nabor* had lived 29 at the Birth of *Terah*, of which *Abraham* had lived 75, at the Departure from *Haran* to *Canaan*, and 100 at the Birth of *Isaac*. And *Isaac's*, *Jacob's*, *Joseph's* and *Moses's* Years were of the same Kind, or Length, with the Years of *Abraham*, because the Series and Computation of Time is made up, out of them all, by adding them together, in reckoning the Time from the giving the Promise to *Abraham*, to the going out of *Egypt*; and so on, from the *Egression from Egypt*, to the building of the *Temple*; from the building of the *Temple*, to its Destruction; and from thence to the End of the *Babylonish* Captivity; when the *Pagan* Chronology clearly connects with the Sacred in the Reign of *Cyrus*.

From these Arguments we may conclude that the Years of the Lives of the Antediluvians were solar Years. They were of the same Length with the Year in which the Flood was, which was a Year with 12 Months, of 30

\* *Gen.* ix. 29.



Days to a Month, or 360 Days, and of the same Length with the Years of *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Moses*, and the Kings of *Judah*, to the *Babylonish* Captivity, and the Beginning of the *Persian* Empire.

2. If we should reckon the Years in these Genealogies, to be not *solar*, but only *lunar* Years, much greater Incongruities would arise from this Computation, than from the other. Lunar Years, or Lunations, may, at a round Sum, be reckoned to consist of 30 Days to a Year, and then the very oldest of the Patriarchs would not have lived to a greater Age, than many Persons have arrived at, in every Age since; for *Metbuselah*, who was 969 Years old, would but have lived 80 Years and 9 Months, for  $969 \div 12 = 80 \frac{9}{12}$ ; and yet in *Moses's* History the Life of Man is said to be much *reduced* from the Longevity of the earlier Ages of the World. *Jacob* called his own Days but *few*, compared with the Lives of his Progenitors, *that is*, before they were weak by Years, as he at that Time was, which must refer to his distant Progenitors. —Again; tho' there would have been nothing remarkable as to their old Age at the Time of their Death, for *Lamech* lived 777 Years, not quite 65 Years; for  $777 \div 12 = 64 \frac{9}{12}$  solar Years —yet the Time of their Puberty, or Manhood, would have been greatly unnatural, compared with Mankind ever since. *Enoch* must have had *Metbuselah* at about five Years and an half old; and *Mabalaleel* must have had *Jared*, at the same Age, for  $65 \div 12 = 5 \frac{5}{12}$ . *Arphaxad* would have had *Salah* at two Years and eleven Months old; and the other Patriarchs, before the Disperſion, would have had their first-born Sons, at about two Years and an half; for 30 divided by 12 will give in the Quotient two Years and an half  $\frac{30}{12} = 2 \frac{6}{12}$ . They all from *Salah* to *Nabor* had Children about 30 Years of Age at a Medium.

Now, if we reject the solar Years in this Computation, and embrace the lunar, to avoid what may be thought an incredible *Longevity*; yet we run upon a greater Absurdity, as to the incredible Time of their *Maturity*, or Manhood. For the Years must sure be of the same Sort or Length, between their Birth and their having Children, as betwixt their having Children and their Death. And this Way of reckoning will bring even the Antediluvians to have had Children at five or six Years old, and the Postdiluvians at about two or three Years old, *i. e.* they must have been at the Heads of Families before they could speak plain, before they had attained to any Knowledge of Language, unless we suppose a constant Miracle inspiring them with the Knowledge and Language of Manhood, at the Infant State of five or three, or even two Years old.

And upon the whole, the *Mosaic* History will be much more unnatural on the lunar, than it can be pretended to be on the solar Reckoning. The whole Time of the ancient World would be only for 138 Years Continuance, for  $1656 \div 12 = 138$ ; and in so narrow a Space of Time, there could be no room for making any Improvements comparatively, either in Arts or Sciences, in Civil or Religious Knowledge.

This



This Method of Computation would sink the Postdiluvians almost down to Insects, which grow and perish in a Season. It would however reduce the greatest Sages to Children. *Terah* would have been but 17 solar Years old at his Death. And *Abraham*, after all his Experience and Eminency of Virtue and Knowledge, would have been but six Years old at his leaving *Haran*, and not 15 at his Death; and yet he had travelled thro' a great Variety of Countries and People in the Time, which is impossible.

II. As to the second Objection, that if the Years are to be accounted solar Years, then the Chronology is utterly incredible, on Account of its unnatural Longevity.

I. I reply, That this Notion of the very great Length of Man's Life in the early Ages of the World, prevailed among the ancient *Pagan* Nations. It was never objected to the *Hebrew* Historian as any Way incredible. But on the contrary, confirmed by their Agreement in relating the same Thing. The *Chaldeans* particularly assigned a Longevity to their Ancestors, vastly exceeding the *Hebrew* Accounts. I quote not this for the Truth of those enormous *Chaldean* Computations, but only to shew that the Notion of the primitive, extraordinary Longevity, did not appear unnatural to the early Ages of *Paganism*.

The learned Jewish Antiquary *Josephus*,\* having related the History of the long Lives of the Patriarchs adds: "Let no one, upon comparing the Lives of the Ancients with our Lives, and with the few Years which we now live, think that what we have said of them is false." "I have says he, for Witness to what I have said, all those who have written *Antiquities*, both among the *Greeks* and *Barbarians*. For even *Manetbo*, who wrote the *Egyptian* History; and *Berosus*, who collected the *Chaldean* Monuments; and *Mochus* and *Hesticeus*; and besides these, *Hieronymus* the *Egyptian*, and those, who composed the *Phœnician* History, agree to what I here say. *Hesiod* also, and *Hecataeus*, and *Hellanicus*, and *Acusilaus*; and besides these, *Ephorus*, and *Nicolaus* of *Damascus*, relate that the Ancients lived 1000 Years." And Mr. *Whiston* here justly notes, that, had *Josephus* read the *Latin* Authors as he did the *Greek*, he would have had a still greater Catalogue of ancient Authors, to confirm the sacred History, in one of it's most difficult Branches. *Varro*, the most learned of the *Romans*, made this Enquiry, What the Reason was, that the Ancients were supposed to have lived 1000 Years? Now, if that learned *Roman* entered into a Disquisition of that Point, it is plain that it must have been a prevailing Tradition, that they were said to live long. And tho' most of the Authors, which *Josephus* refers to, are now lost, yet some yet remain, which may establish his Testimony as to

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the

\* *Joseph. Antiq. Jud. Lib. i. c. 3.*



the rest. *Hesiod*, in his *Works and Days*, v. 129, 130, describes the second Age thus:

Ἄλλ' ἑκάστον μὲν πᾶσι ἔταρα μῆτερι καὶ οὐ  
Ἐτρεφετ' ἀτάλαντον, μέγα νηπίος, ὃ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ.

Which Mr. Cooke translates thus:

“ An hundred Years the careful Dames employ,  
“ Before they form to Man th' unpolish'd Boy.”

Man was *μέγα νηπίος*, a *great Infant* at 100 Years old, according to *Hesiod*, in the Second or Silver Age.

2. This great Longevity of the first Generations of Mankind gives us a noble Idea of human Nature, which was originally made for Immortality; and which was so formed, as even after the Fall, to continue for so long a Duration. This Circumstance confirms the other Parts of the *Mosaic* History, concerning our primitive Perfection. How different from the diminutive, weak Reptile, into which Man is now shrivelled up, was he at the Beginning? We must conceive of a much greater Nobleness, Strength and Vigour of their primitive Frame, which could stand, without wearing away, almost 1000 Years.

The Length of *Adam's* Life, may, perhaps, intimate to us what was to have been the Continuance of Man in this World, had he not sinned, before he was to be translated into the celestial Regions. He lived 930 Years in a State of Maturity, being created in a State of Manhood, or the Prime of Youth; and by the Account of the Ages of the Patriarchs at their Marriage, it seems as if 70 was the Prime of their Youth; so that *Adam's* Life might be about equivalent to 1000 Years from Infancy. The Difference might, perhaps, have been this, that had they not become mortal, and been debarred from the Tree of Life, they should have continued 1000 Years in this World, in their full Vigour, till their Translation; (which, however, would have been necessary to make room for new Generations) whereas, when they were become mortal, tho' they were at first permitted to arrive at near the same Length of Life; yet it was accompanied with Decays, which gradually bended them down to the Dust.—Now this Account of their very long Life gives a most noble Idea of the Excellency and Perfection of their original Frame, and may therefore be very credible.

3. There is nothing unnatural or wonderful in a long Life, any more than a short one, on any Principles of Philosophy or Mechanism. A living Machine is indeed in itself a wonderful Work. An organized Body composed of such a Multitude of Parts of such exquisite Structure, Connection, and mutual Dependence; which yet are capable of being regularly repaired, and for some time augmented and enlarged, in Magnitude and Strength, is a Wonder



der of divine Operation. It is truly admirable to observe how from that *Speck of Entity*, as Dr. Garth poetically expresses it, in the primitive Fluid, should arise the Embryo, the Foetus, and then the living Animal, in such sensible Dilatation and gradual Growth of every Part, after it's Birth, and a Proportion of Strength, answerable to the Magnitudes. How it should be built up as upon regular Columns, and the whole Compages of the Fabric tied and fastened together by Solids of different Hardness and Consistency, as the Bones, Muscles and Tendons; some to be flexible, others firm, according to their different Use. How all these should be nourished by numberless proper Canals, of such various Size and Shape, conical or cylindrical, fitted to secrete and convey a Variety of different Fluids. All this is, indeed, the astonishing Workmanship of the Almighty. And the very Origin of the Motions in this admirable Machine cannot be explained by any known Laws of Mechanics, but must be resolved into the Will and Action of the Creator.

But then, when this wonderful Work is set forward, under the Inspection and Agency of God: When, by due Quantities and Qualities of Food, Air, and Exercise, our Bodies do grow and strengthen, what Principles of Philosophy, or Mechanism, can be assigned for the stopping their Growth, and the commencing of their Decay, at certain given Periods? If an animal Body can, with these due Proportions of Supplies, live in Vigour to 100 Years, why not to 500? If, indeed, it falls in the Way of a Lion, or a Cannon Ball, it is no Wonder if it is rent, or dashed to Pieces. So again; Excesses and Irregularities will account for it's decaying. Unnatural Quantities or Qualities of Food, Air, or Exercise, gorging with Gluttony, or enflaming with Debauch, will explain the Destruction of the Machine, however exactly adjusted in all it's Parts. But we are now enquiring into the certain periodical Decays of old Age, which come upon Men, let them live ever so regularly and exactly. — In Machines, made up of dead Parts, incapable of regular new Supplies, Friction and Rust, or the Adhesion of heterogeneous Particles, will account for their being soon spoiled, as the Wheels of a Clock. But in a living Machine, where there is a constant mechanical Repair of every wasting Part, by uniting and incorporating new similar Matter, so that it wastes and grows reciprocally, I cannot see how a certain Decay can be explained, at any given Period. — We have the Judgment of the greatest Naturalists and Physicians, in Support of this Opinion. There must, say they, be indeed a due Flexibility of the Vessels, Muscles, and Fibres, in order to the performing the animal Functions. \* And, in so tender a Frame, there must necessarily be many small Particles rubbed off from the Solids, by the Humours, or Fluids, gliding thro' their Channels. But then there are similar Particles that come in with the new Juices, properly prepared. These being similar in Figure, Magnitude, and Kind, fit the Vacancies left by the Particles that were rubbed off, and unite to the Solids, and so perpetually repair them, and keep them in their due

\* Boerhaave, de Incrementis.



due Tone and Texture, Flexibility, and Strength, as long as God thinks fit. \* And tho' it be true that there are more Fluids in Proportion than Solids in every growing animal Body; and that in aged ones, the Properties of the Solids encrease, and some Channels of Vessels are lost by the Compression of their contiguous Vessels; and that therefore at last, without a Miracle, the Rigidity would overcome the Flexibility; yet what I alledge, is this, that no Philosophical Principles can determine the *Period when* this Change must happen; or why at 80, any more than 800. So that the History of the long Lives of the Patriarchs, cannot be confuted by any Principles of Philosophy. — Further, there are some Things in constant Experience, in the Course of Nature, which may illustrate this Point. An Horse is old at 20, a Man at 70, and yet the whole Fabric of the Horse seems stronger than that of a Man.

4. Some natural Causes may be assigned for their living to so great an Age. † The Quality of their Food, added to the natural Strength of their Frame, might occasion an extraordinary Longevity. The Antediluvians lived probably entirely on vegetable Diet; and those Vegetables springing up in the very Youth of Nature, and propagated from the very purest and richest Juices, might be more bland and balmy than they are now. The Particles of the best and most nutritious Kind were most plentifully sown at first in the prolific Lap of Nature; and there may be now a Decrease of those finest Parts. And there may be a Mixture of some noxious Particles with them; some Kind of Salts or Mineral Particles, which may be opened out by our digging so much in the Bowels of the Earth, and bringing some of those mineral Beds to the Surface, which might not be so common at first.

Again; there seems to be a plain Hint in the *Mosaic* History, that their original *Stamina* were stronger than after the Flood. Sixty-five are the very lowest Years at which any of these Patriarchs had Children. From this I should think that 65 was the Flower of Youth; and that they were growing in Strength, and perhaps Size and Stature too, generally to near an 100 Years old. And if their Organs required so much Time to come to their Maturity, it is rational to suppose that they would be answerably longer before their Decay. — † Finally; most Authors have apprehended that the first World enjoyed a greater Serenity in the Air, and Temperature of the Seasons, than have prevailed since the Flood. All these natural Causes might conspire to their remarkable Longevity.

5. There may be some final Causes suggested, why Men should be continued longer in the World in the Beginning, than afterwards. — We should doubtless be very cautious in presuming to explain the Ends and Reasons of Providence, in any of it's Ways, when God has not revealed them. Yet, when we consider the Benignity of the divine Nature, we may perceive the Happiness of the Creature to be one End of the divine Acts. — In the Beginning, the Condition

\* Boerb. *ibid.*† Joseph. *Antiq. Jud.* l. 1. c. iii.† Burnet. *Theor.*



Condition of the World seemed to require long Life, much more than now. The Earth was wholly unpeopled, except for one Pair; it might then appear worthy of the Wisdom and Benignity of God, to endue Man with a stronger Frame, and to allow them a longer Continuance in the World, for the more speedy Encrease of Inhabitants.—Again; every necessary Art was to be invented, for all the Uses and Conveniences of human Life; and it might require a long Course of Time, and many repeated Essays, to bring them to any considerable Perfection. The Instruments necessary for Husbandry, for tilling the Ground, for reaping the Fruits, and preparing the Grain for their necessary Bread, would require many Thoughts and many Essays, both to choose out the proper Materials to make them of, and to prepare them for Use. The very Invention of Fire seems to me astonishing, and almost impossible, unless the heavenly Lightening fired some Tree, or other combustible Matter; and without Fire, convenient Tools and Instruments would be impossible. If they broke off the Branch of a Tree, with which to dig the Earth, for sowing their Corn, it must be very tedious and laborious. They must have been necessarily attentive to every new Accident, that might favour their Discoveries; and remark on all the Actions of the inferior Animals, who were taught by Instinct to take the most proper Ways, and would be their Patterns in almost every Invention.

This Sentiment is finely pursued by our great Cotemporary Poet.\*

- “ See him from Nature rising slow to Art:
- “ To copy *Instinct* then was *Reason's* Part.
- “ Thus, then, to Man the Voice of Nature spake,
- “ Go! from the Creatures thy Instruction take.
- “ Learn from the Birds, what Food the Thickets yield;
- “ Learn from the Beasts, the Physic of the Field.
- “ Thy Art of Building, from the Bee receive;
- “ Learn of the Mole to plow; the Worm to weave;
- “ Learn of the little *Nautilus* to sail,
- “ Spread the thin Oar, and catch the driving Gale.”

All the necessary, *mechanic* Arts must be rude *at first*, for Want of convenient Materials, of which to make their Instruments. 'Till Metals were found out, we can scarce conceive how there could be such Things as the mechanic Arts in the World. 'Till the Spade, the Ax, the Saw, and Knife were invented, Arts must make a very slow Progress. Sharp Stones must have been the best Means for sharpening any Instruments of Wood, 'till Metals were discovered.—Now, in this Infant State of every Kind of Art, relating to Tillage, Building, Cloathing, and every other Necessary, it would be very expedient that Men should live long; that, by multiplied Essays and Experiments,

\* *Essay on Man*. Ep. III.



Experiments, they might bring their Inventions to some Maturity and Perfection. Their Work, in every Part of it, must be manifold more laborious, in such a Scarcity and Coarseness of Tools; and must require more Strength of Body, when assisted with so few Helps, compared with what *Mechanics* have since added to it.

Again; young Plantations would stand in need of Persons of Years, Authority and Experience to guard them from 1000 Inconveniences, which young Persons might not be aware of. This Infant Condition of the World, as to civil Policy, would require People at the Head of each new Settlement, who might have the Authority of Age to restrain the Exorbitances of Youth. It would, probably, be very difficult to secure Property, in the most necessary Things, when an Ax, a Spade, a Knife, would be far more valuable than an Heap of Gold.

“ Here too all Forms of social Union find,

“ And hence let Reason late, instruct Mankind :

“ Here subterranean Works and Cities see;

“ There Towns Aerial on the waving Tree.

“ Learn each small People's Genius, Policies;

“ The Ant's Republick, and the Realm of Bees;

“ How those in common all their Stores bestow,

“ And *Anarchy* without Confusion know;

“ And these for ever, tho' a *Monarch* reign,

“ Their sep'rate Cells and Properties maintain.

“ Mark what unvary'd Laws preserve their State,

“ Laws wise as *Nature*, and as fix'd as *Fate*.”\*

These Considerations render it probable, that Man's Life should have been longer, when there was such a Necessity for it. It is every Way worthy of the Wisdom and Benignity of God, to order the Course of Things for the Conveniency of his Creatures. And since the most ancient *Historian* expressly sets down the Length of their Lives, we may acquiesce in this Computation as true; which, by all these Circumstances, appears so probable in itself.

I have thus finished the Account I proposed of the State of *Religious Knowledge*, in the *Patriarchal Church*, and under the first Period of *Revelation*. And I hope I have made it out, to competent Satisfaction, that from the Facts, which our first Parents were Eye-witnesses of; and the Revelations which were actually made to themselves; a very useful System of *Religious Truths* might be deduced, by a common Understanding, with an ordinary Diligence and Application. And that supposing but the common Principles and Passions of the human Nature to have prevailed then, which have prevailed ever since, *viz.* parental Affections, common Curiosity, and the social Temper,

\* *Essay on Man*. Ep. III. v. 180.



Temper, then those great Events and religious Principles inferred from them, would most probably be communicated; and, being once communicated to all *Adam's* Children, considering their extreme Longevity, they could not be lost, or much depraved and corrupted before the Flood. From the illustrious Instance of *Noah's* Piety, I have proved that they were not lost, or much depraved. And all the Antediluvians, in the Nature of Things, might have had near equal Opportunities of attaining a like Acquaintance with the *Fundamentals of Religion*, had they made a right Use of them.

## C H A P. V.

*On Tradition from the Flood to the Dispersion.*

WE are now to enquire into the State of Knowledge, especially Religious Knowledge, after the Flood; and in what Perfection we may suppose it capable of being preserved, to the Time of the *general Dispersion*.—I do not, through this Period, find any more Help from the ancient Authors of *Paganism*, than through the last; and therefore, must chiefly depend on the *Mosaic* History, for all the Facts, as before. But there is one great Coadjutor in the whole Progress of this Work, relating to these unlettered Ages, I mean that superlative Critic and Historian *Common Sense*, which will often help us out, when we have no other *History* to consult. From the Facts recorded by *Moses*, I argue, upon the common Principles of human Nature, that the State of their Knowledge in *Religion*, and even in *Arts and Sciences*, must have been nearly such as here represented, both before and after the *Flood*.

## S E C T. I.

*On the Knowledge which Noah himself had before the Flood came.*

I. HE was in Possession of the whole Treasure of Antediluvian Knowledge, either as it was derived from *Adam*, or improved by any succeeding pious or curious Enquiries, upon the Subject of *Religion*.—*Noah* was one of the most eminent of his Contemporaries, for Knowledge, Piety, and Virtue; and for Fortitude and Courage in Defence of Truth; for he was a long Time a *Preacher of Righteousness*. If we consider what *Moses* relates concerning him, we have a strong Presumption that he was a Person of fine Parts and Genius, of great Application to the useful Sciences of that Age,  
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and great Proficiency in them. He was *perfect* in his Generations, which seems to imply other Kinds of Excellency, as well as that of Piety. From his being a *Preacher of Righteousness*, we may conclude that he had both Courage and Abilities; and that he feared not to oppose either the gravest Philosophers, or the Men of Wit and Vivacity, who might unite their Efforts of Argument and Wit, Reasoning and Ridicule, in Behalf of the prevailing Licentiousness of the Age. As every Age, we know any thing of, has produced such Variety of Characters, why might not that also? And as all Reformers have been generally qualified with some peculiar Spirit and Abilities for such Work, why may we not suppose that *Noah* was qualified in like Manner? He must have been a great as well as a good Man, who could be fit for such a Province, and could fill it with Propriety and Dignity. A Man of the utmost Integrity would scarce have been much taken Notice of, unless he had considerable Talents and Capacities; for a very honest Man, if he is but a weak Man, is commonly the Sport of profligate People. But, from the short Account we have of his Character, Work, and Age, he appears to have been a Sort of Compendium of Antediluvian Perfection. In bodily Vigour, he seems to have been among the Chief, since he lived to the greatest Age of any of the Patriarchs except two. He was eminent, like *Enoch*, for his Sanctity, it being described by the same Phrase in both Characters, *walking with God*. He was chosen to be the Monitor of the World, for 120 Years at least; and finally, he presided in directing and building the Ark, which bespeaks a competent Knowledge in the vulgar Arts. So that the Conveyance of all the Treasures of *Religious* Knowledge at least, from the old to the new World, was by one of the most able Hands.

II. Besides *Religion*, the principal Branches of *Natural* and *Civil* Knowledge, and the *Arts* and *Sciences*, which had been invented by the Sagacity, or improved by the Industry of so many 100 Years, must have come down into the new World, by the Hands of *Noah* and his Family. Both the Improvements of Male and Female Life; whatever had been discovered for the Necessities or Conveniences, the Ornament or Embellishment, the virtuous Pleasure or Entertainment of human Life, must have had it's safe Conveyance by their Means. They were appointed by Providence as the great Correspondents betwixt the two Worlds.—We have, as I observed before, clear Accounts in the History of *Moses*, of several useful Inventions and Improvements. A Skill in Agriculture, and the Pastoral Life, was carried to some Perfection, in the second Century; for *Cain* and *Abel's* Oblations were agreeable to their different particular Occupations. *Cain* built a City about that Time, which he named after his Son, *Enoch*, who might be born about the Time of *Seth's* Birth. Many, that were not Improvers of *Religion*, yet made Proficiency in *Arts* and *Sciences*, both of the useful and elegant Kind. The Posterity of *Cain*, in the sixth Generation, were eminent for several Inventions,



tions, both for the Profit and Pleasure of Mankind. Such as musical Instruments, the Preparation of Metals, and various Works in Brass and Iron. And though, as an ingenious \* Author conjectures, these were only mentioned as Instances of the Degeneracy of the World; being only Inventions of Instruments of War, or Luxury; yet still they were Improvements, which could be applied to good Purposes, innocent Amusement, and Self-defence; as well as the bad ones of criminal Pleasures, or destructive Wars. And further, the Improvement that was made in Tents, and the Management of Cattle, was certainly a beneficial Art, at that Time improved; and perhaps *Naamah*, their Sister, might be eminent for Improvements in Spinning, or the Loom, or Needle Work, for the greater Conveniency, or Ornament of Garments and Drefs. And, if we may suppose that the Use of Metals was but found out then, this will account for the Birth of many other Arts about the same Time, which could scarce subsist without Brass, or Iron Tools.—Now, supposing these eminent Fathers of the ancient Arts to have invented them in their Prime, as at two or three hundred Years of Age; then *Noah* himself might live with them many hundred Years; so that these nascent Arts cannot be supposed to escape his Knowledge. And accordingly, by the History of the building the Ark, it is evident that the mechanic Arts, and the necessary Instruments for carrying them on, must have reached the other Line, the Posterity of *Seth*, from the Inventors, who were of the Line of *Cain*; and so probably were become pretty general. The Ax, the Saw, the Chisel, &c. must have been then in Use; or otherwise so strong and vast, so regular and compact a Fabric could not have been compleated.

But then, further, *Noah* himself knew, by *Revelation*, that, unless the World repented and reformed their Abominations, the whole Race was to be destroyed; and therefore all the Arts must perish with the Artisans, in that general Desolation, unless he endeavoured to preserve them in his own Family. He knew this at least 120 Years before it came. And, when he was thus apprised of such a general Catastrophe approaching, it must have been an unpardonable Indolence and Insensibility in him, not to make himself Master of every Art, which the World afterwards should have Occasion for. Wherefore we may conclude that all the useful Inventions and Improvements would, in common Prudence, be collected by *Noah* and his Family.—They would, doubtless, labour to attain as perfect a Skill as they were able, not only in Agriculture and the Pastoral Life, and the Management of every Thing about Food; but in all the Branches of Architecture and Mechanics, for building and cloathing; and in preparing Metals for Tools, Instruments and Engines for every Purpose in Life.

III. There were several supernatural Revelations, and Predictions of future Events, *personally* made to *Noah*, which were a rich Addition to his ancient Stock of Religious Knowledge. He had, by *Revelation*, a clear Prediction

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\* *Rev. Exam. with Candour*. Vol. I. p. 166.



tion of the general Deluge; and a determinate Account of the Reason of it, even the universal Wickedness of the World. He was acquainted with the Time of it's Coming, or the Distance from the Prediction to the Event. He was instructed supernaturally in the Means of his own Preservation, which he, agreeable to this divine Monition, prepared accordingly. And, left, thro' Ignorance of the Number of Animals to be preserved, or the Nature and Length of the Deluge, and whether it should be a calm or a stormy Surface, he should have built improperly, both the Materials and the Dimensions, the very Shape and Model of the Fabric, were all supernaturally imparted to him. It may be very probable that he might not know all the Species of Animals in the World, and so might be liable to err as to the Dimensions of the Ark, either in making it too large or too small. He might be liable to Mistakes also as to the Model, thro' Ignorance of the Nature of the Deluge, whether it should be calm or tempestuous: But very little was left to his own Sagacity. The very gathering and laying up the Provisions in Quantity and Quality, suitable to the Design of maintaining all, till new Supplies could grow up, after the Flood was over, was managed under divine Direction.\*

Thus was the great *Patriarch* furnished with the Knowledge and Arts of the old World; and with all these particular Directions how to sail in Safety over the Bosom of the boundless Ocean of Waters, and above the Wrecks and Ruins of this terrestrial World. With all his rich Cargoe he sailed under the Eye of a vigilant Providence, and with this at last he landed on the Mountains of *Ararat*. He might confide in the divine Conduct, for he carried the whole human Race with him, not like the arrogant Vanity of the ancient Tyrant, *Vebis Cæsarem*.

Here we are to date the Time, and fix the Place of the Plantation of the new World. Here the Remnant of Mankind resided within the Ark many Months, before the Ground was sufficiently drained, so as to be fit for their going out to inhabit it.—And what may we apprehend to have been their natural Behaviour in this Situation? Surely many a Reflection on what was past; many a grateful Remark on their present State of Survivorship, when all the rest of the Race was expunged from the Face of the Earth; and many a holy Resolution, as to their future Conduct, must be the frequent Employment of their Time, for the several Months in which they waited after they were a-ground, before they went ashore.—But, when they came on dry Land, what an affecting Alteration must they observe to have been made on the whole Face of the Earth, during the Interval of their own Confinement within the safe Enclosures of the Ark! They could look back on the World they formerly knew in all it's *Cultivation* and Improvement, full of the Magnificence and Pride of Man; and compare it with the spacious Ruins, which the desolated Face of Things now presented to the Eye of the Beholders. But what awful Thoughts must crowd into their Minds on this astonishing Prospect!

Noah

\* Gen. vi. 21.



*Noah* and his Family came out of the Ark, into a *dispeopled World*. They, who at their going in, left it full of Inhabitants of all Ages; venerable old Men of 900 Years old, and Infants on the Breast. Thousands in all the Gaiety and Bloom of Youth, Thousands in the Vigour and Prime of Manhood, marrying and giving in Marriage; and the Youths and Virgins in the Song and Dance. They, who left it thus full of People, ranging thro' all the Pleasures or the Cares of Life, found it one waste Desolation and boundless Ruin, without Man, or the Works of Man. No Flocks adorned the Mountains, or Herbs covered the once fruitful Plains; no Season smiled with the Verdure or Flowers of Spring, or with the Fruits of Autumn, but one bleak and dreary Prospect of incrusted Mud appeared, one uniform Scene of Desolation.—The first natural Step, that *Noah* and his Family could take, must be to make pious and devout Reflexions on this whole humbling Alteration, the vast Reverse of all that they had ever beheld before. If a small Company, *Parvis componere Magna*—should be cast ashore upon some desolate Coast, after a raging Tempest had tore in Pieces whole Royal Navies, and covered the Coast with the Wrecks of the Fleet, and the Bodies of their former Companions in Commerce or Arms; must not their Hearts be as insensible as the Rocks, on which they perished, if the moving Scene did not awake them to pious Remarks, on the Destruction of others, and their own Deliverance. But this must be especially natural in a Person of such eminent Knowledge and Piety, as the great *Patriarch* was. He would not only be apt to remark suitably on the Funeral of the old World, but consecrate the new to the Service of their great Deliverer; and dedicate himself and them to perpetual Obedience to God, in an uniform and unchangeable Course of Piety and Virtue.

## S E C T. II.

*On the Facts and Revelations about the Time of the Flood, which were subjoined to Noah's Stock of ancient Knowledge, by all which he could instruct the new World further in Religion.*

AS I have in the former Part endeavoured to set forth the Materials which *Adam* had for building up the Structure of Religion and Virtue in the old World, so I shall here set together in one View, the Materials which *Noah* himself had, for laying the Foundations, and for successfully erecting a fair Edifice of the same kind, in the new World, as he could not lose his own former Instructions, nor miss the new ones.

E. *Noah*



*Noah* had the whole Compass of the ancient Knowledge in his Possession, as I have already observed. All the original Facts, which *Adam* saw, and all the original Revelations which were made to him, and all the Inferences and Deductions which were gathered from the whole. And he was a Person of such eminent Abilities and such distinguished Integrity, that all this would be carefully treasured up and cultivated by himself, and faithfully imparted to, and inculcated upon, all his Family and Posterity that came within his Reach.

What was a natural and congruous Behaviour for a Man of his excellent Character and Piety, we may easily gather from the Reason of Things; and how he did behave, *Moses* informs us, *Gen. viii. 20. And Noah builded an Altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean Beast, and of every clean Fowl, and offered Burnt-offerings on the Altar.*

In this first Action, which is recorded of him, we find the Revival of the ancient Religion. He offered *clean Beasts*, such as God had (probably) ordained for Sacrifices, as the very learned *Dr. Hunt* observes;\* and no doubt all the proper Branches of Devotion accompanied this external Rite, viz. Adoration of the divine Perfections, Praise and Thanksgiving for their miraculous Preservation from that Destruction, which had consumed all the rest, and earnest Supplications, for the Continuance of the divine Blessing and Favour.

It appears, that *Noah* acted in Character, he begun with Devotion. Yet, as he used the Rite of *sacrificing*, we may suppose that this was the Directory originally given to our first Parents, after the Fall, and is an Evidence that he taught and practised the ancient Religion of the *Patriarchal Church*, and set out upon that Foundation. And the plain Tokens of his Acceptance, † may be considered as a further Proof of Sacrifices being really of divine Appointment.

II. In this new Period, there were many memorable Facts and Revelations both before, at, and after the Deluge, which were not only cogent Confirmations of the ancient Articles of Faith, but also clear and conspicuous Republications of the primitive Truths. And these the Antediluvians had not.

I. *Noah* had a clear and punctual Revelation of the general Deluge. This was an Event of such a Nature, that it could never possibly have been foreseen by his own Sagacity; nor could it have been apprehended to be possible, by any *Phenomena* in Nature, that there should be Water enough to cover all the higher Land. It must therefore have been imparted or communicated to him by the Spirit of Prophecy, as *Moses* represents it, *Gen. vi. 17.* In which it is plainly

\* *Essay*, p. 50.

† *Gen. viii. 21.*



plainly intimated, that this Flood should not be owing to any Incidents which should happen then, and might happen again; but to the immediate Appointment, Energy, and Operation of the Almighty, I, EVEN I, do bring a Flood of Waters upon the Earth to destroy all Flesh.

The Patriarch could, doubtless, distinguish what was a true Revelation from God, from all the Suggestions and Fancies of his own Mind. God must necessarily, at all Times, have this Power of communicating his Will in such an indubitable Manner, to his Creatures, that they may certainly distinguish his speaking or suggesting any Thing to them, by infallible Criteria, from all other Correspondence whatsoever.\* And, tho' we, who never have had Revelations, may not be able to give any Account of the Marks, by which genuine divine Revelations may be known from the Illusions of the Devil, the Refveries of our own Mind, or any Visions of Enthusiasm, or Voices of Deceit and Imagination; yet we cannot but think that the Deity can perfectly and infallibly make his own Mind known, with Certainty of it's coming from himself. Accordingly, tho', as I have said, no Man could ever conceive of any such Event from any Knowledge of Nature; yet Noah firmly believed it, and warned others of the Danger. For he made the necessary Preparations for his own Preservation, tho' doubtless amidst an infinite Number of Scoffs and Insults from that profligate and obdurate Generation.

2. The Cause and Reason of this terrible Judgment was expressly made known to the Patriarch in a supernatural Way. Gen. vi. 13. *The Earth is filled with Violence, behold I will destroy them with the Earth.* Their Iniquities were so daring, enormous and universal, that divine Patience would no longer bear those boundless Inundations of Iniquity and Vice. Yet this must be imparted to Noah by Revelation. For, tho' he had been a mournful Witness of their Crimes long, yet no such tremendous Judgment had ensued, and his own Sagacity could not have led him to discover, that these Enormities would precipitate such a signal Vengeance then, any more than before. He very well knew the various Abominations which prevailed, and had been so long the Infamy and Disgrace of Mankind, but he knew that they would be it's speedy Ruin, only by the Revelation.

III. The Distance of the Time from the Prediction to the Event, was also Matter of pure Revelation. Gen. vi. 3. *And the Lord said, my Spirit shall not always strive with Man.—Yet his Days shall be 120 Years, i. e. the Days of my further Forbearance with them shall be 120 Years.* We cannot think that this is merely a divine Soliloquy, or an heavenly Conversation betwixt the Father and the Son, but this was what either by inward Inspiration, or by the Voice of some Celestial Messenger, he communicated to Noah. In this Sense the best Interpreters always understand the 120 Years in this Text; and it has never been true in any other Sense, as a Standard of the Life of Man.

For

\* Jeffery's True Grounds against Collins.



For the Lives of the Antediluvians were not reduced, the oldest Man that ever was dying in the Year of the Flood, and the Postdiluvians, for many Generations, lived several hundred Years apiece.——Then the punctual Accomplishment of that tremendous Prophecy carried such Conviction of it's being the Word of God, as was irresistible to *Noah* and his Family. When they beheld with their own Eyes the terrible Execution of that awful Vengeance, on the whole guilty World, and that it was in the Manner and Time which were so explicitly made known before, by *Revelation*; they must be absolutely convinced that it was, thro' the whole Progress of the awful Work, the Effect of an uncontrollable divine Energy, and the Act and Operation of divine Counsel and Will.

## S E C T. III.

*On the similar Manner in which the old and new World were instructed in Religion.*

WE cannot but observe here how similar the Methods of divine Wisdom were, in instructing Mankind *at first*, in the great fundamental Principles of Religion; and in the Republication of them *now*, to *Noah* and his Sons.——There were several remarkable Facts and great Events, from which they were to reason, and God accompanied them with such Revelations as the Case required. And this Republication of them, was principally by striking and remarkable Facts, out of the ordinary Course of Nature, which *Noah* was now acquainted with; the Cause and End, and Meaning of which extraordinary Events were explained and opened by *Revelation*. And then *Noah* was to reason from them, in this Period, as *Adam* was to do in the former.

I. This great Event of the general Deluge, as a Judgment on the World for their Wickedness, demonstrated the uncontrollable Supremacy of the divine Government. The Evidence and the Arguing were similar to those at first made use of, with Man in Innocency. Evil was threatened *before* it came upon *Adam*, if he disobeyed the divine Law: Evil *here* was threatened *before* it came, if Men, who now were wicked, would obstinately continue therein. In both Cases, the Evil was denounced *before*, that Men might have ample Conviction, that these Events were not meerly unfortunate Accidents, but the Operation of a powerful Mind, and a Purpose of Will and Counsel. And the same uniform Maxims of Purity and Rectitude, conducted both these great Events, *viz.* the putting Mankind under a Sentence of Mortality upon the *first* Sin; and pouring forth the Deluge on the World of the



the Ungodly.—It appeared at the *Fall*, that there was no other Power, or mighty Evil Being, who could defend Transgression against God. It *now* appeared with the like lucid Evidence, that there was not yet any rival Power found out, any potent Patron of Sin, which divided the Empire of the World, with the Almighty Father of Virtue and Goodness.

Had any Principles of *Polytheism* crept into the Antediluvian Creed; had any Suspicion of an Almighty Evil Principle, got footing among the Libertines, the Abusers of that noble Thing, *Free-thinking*, in that Age of profligate Manners, and perhaps profligate Wit; what a sensible and silencing Confutation would this decisive Event give to all these impious Opinions! — The Advocates of such latitudinary Sentiments were all buried in the Ruins of the old World, washed away from the Face of that Earth, which was polluted by such enormous Faith and Manners. And there could scarce be any Danger of reviving those exploded Blasphemies for a considerable Time.

II. This amazing Event of the general Flood, taken with all its Circumstances, would afford a strong Confirmation of their former Faith, as to the malignant Nature of Sin. These Sentiments, which were at first deduced from the visible Consequences of the Fall, would have, as it were, a new Republication, by the visible Effects of the Flood. How sensibly must the Survivors of the Deluge perceive this Truth! With what striking Evidence must they be convinced, that Sin is the greatest Infamy and Degradation of our reasonable Nature; that it has in it an insuperable Repugnancy and irreverfible Contrariety to our true Happiness; that no Coincidence of Circumstances, no Numbers, no Resoluteness, no Experience, no Wit, no Combination of all these in the Partizans of it, can ever make Sin a wise or safe Thing; or vacate and reverse the Sentence of the Almighty, which pronounces it infamous, pernicious, and ruinous! — How affectingly and cogently was all this demonstrated, when they saw all the Men of Eminence and Renown, promiscuously fallen and crushed under the Weight of their impious Schemes; all their Arrogance, their false Reasoning, and lively Wit, lost in the common Wrecks and Ruins of the shattered World!

III. This dreadful Event, with all its Circumstances, would unanswerably demonstrate God's constant actual Cognizance of Sin, and his unchangeable Displeasure with it. This was a new but awful Republication of this Truth, which was learnt at first, by the Expulsion from *Paradise*, the sad Inheritance of *Mortality*, and the other sad Effects of the first Transgression.

God's long Forbearance might nourish the presumptuous Imagination, that he had forsaken the Earth, and left it to that lawless Generation, as if it had been no longer under his Inspection or Care. But this grand Event was an Evidence undeniable of his rectoral Cognizance of the Actions of all Men;

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and his irreconcilable Indignation against Vice and Immorality, when Men will proceed impenitently and incorrigibly therein.

IV. The Preservation of *Noah* and his Family, with every Species of Land Animals, in the Ark, according to his own Appointment, and not thro' *Noah's* particular Sagacity, was a most affecting Lecture upon divine Mercy. This was a most moving Republication of the Doctrine of God's Benignity, and an illustrating Commentary, on this Article of their ancient Faith. Tho' there were so many Truths of the awful Kind, cleared up and confirmed, yet it was not all *Terror* which was taught even by this desolating Dispensation of extraordinary Providence. The miraculous Preservation of one Family must have been a most sensible Lesson of divine Pity and Compassion, and must endearingly engage those who shared therein, in the most grateful Admiration of God's distinguishing Favour and Love to them.—As this Dispensation demonstrated God's Pity, so it had a natural Tendency to draw them to all the dutiful Returns of Love and Gratitude. How insensible must that Heart be, that did not glow with ardent and devout Love, under such unexampled Instances of their heavenly Father's singular and peculiar Care!—Again; the Preservation of the Brute Animals, not only express'd God's Benignity and Goodness, but also his *Wisdom* in the Original Creation, *that all was very good*.—This Proceeding of Providence plainly shewed that all the inferior Creatures were made for useful Ends; and that they were worthy of his Wisdom, who had fixed the whole Scale and Gradation of Creatures, from the most contemptible Insect, up to the imperial Race of Man, at the Head of them.—There are many of the Brute Creation which appear to us to be *useless*, and many that seem to be *noxious*, but it was intimated by this extraordinary Preservation of each Species, that each of them had their proper Use and End; and that the World would be less perfect without them, than with them.—Again; this Proceeding of Divine Providence carried in it a gentle, tacit Hint, that we should universally habituate our Hearts to Tenderness, towards all Beings capable of suffering, or feeling Misery; that we should eradicate all the Seeds of Cruelty and Barbarity from our Temper, so as to be incapable of taking Pleasure in any unnecessary Instances of it, towards any sensitive Being. In this View, *Maimonides* \* explains some of the *Jewish Laws*, on the Account of their prohibiting the *Signa Cruditatis*, and greatly applauds them.—God himself has made the Lion and the Tyger, those Terrors of the Forests, for wise Reasons; which, if we do not know, it is very presumptuous to deny. But he, who made them, miraculously preserved them; therefore they are still proper Parts of this lower Creation. But then *Man* should not, by his Cruelty, add an unnatural Breed or Species of Savages, to those which an all-gracious God saw to be enough for the Beauty and Order of his Works. A Lion, a Tyger, or a Wolf, of God's making,

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\* *Mor. Nevoch.* p. 3. c. 48.



is no Deformity in the System of the natural World, but an human wild Beast is a Monster of our own making, and is a detestable Deformity where-ever it appears. Tho' the sovereign Proprietor enlarged the Grant to Mankind after the Flood, of animal Food, and so gave them an Authority to take away their Life, whenever they should have Occasion for them, yet this was to be done with as little Cruelty as possible. And, tho' he encouraged Men not to fear the fiercest or the strongest of the Creatures, since the Dominion over them should be maintained without much Difficulty, by a natural Instinct of the Fear of Man.\* Yet still Man was not, by any unnecessary Cruelty, to provoke them into unnatural Rebellion against himself, or to act in Defiance of that Instinct planted in them for our Security.

V. This amazing Revolution in the natural World, being the avowed Workmanship and Operation of God, would further enforce the Belief of his natural Perfections of Power, Wisdom and Goodness. They had seen all Nature put out of Frame by the Flood. It's stable Pillars shook beneath, and the Arches of the Sky rent asunder above. They had seen the proud destroying Waves sweep into Oblivion Man, and all the Works of Man; and to blot out the conspicuous Distinctions of all the Works of Nature too. They had seen the ancient Barriers of the Ocean broken down; the Distinction of Sea and Land expunged; the lofty Mountains sunk like a covered Rock in the Sea, which might have stood as the Boundaries of Empires before.—And yet, in a certain Space of Time, they saw all Nature restored again, and Order once more emerge out of that *Chaos*, which so much resembled the first rude Mass, out of which this orderly Universe was made at the Beginning. They saw all the heavenly Bodies move again, in all their due Velocities, Distances and Directions; the Sun and Moon, and every Star restored to their former Lustre, Place and Use, and measuring Seasons and Time as before. Those immense Treasuries of Waters, which lately formed a boundless Ocean, leaving no distinguishable Coast or Shore, were again collected into proper Beds; and left the Mountains and the Plains as before. The Springs begun again to rise, and the Rivers flowed in their proper Channels, for the equal Distribution of Water, as animal and vegetable Life required, and for repairing Nature's ruined Face. This was almost like a new Creation, and *Noah* and his Sons were Witnesses, and in a Sense Spectators of all this wondrous Change; whereas *Adam* had but the Account of the original Creation from another. This View therefore of the Ruin and Repair of the System of the natural World, would very sensibly and powerfully enforce on their Minds a Conviction of the infinite Power and Wisdom of God. It was easy to apprehend that none but that great Architect, who built this wondrous Fabric, could thus put it out of Order, and almost take it in Pieces, and then set it together again, in all it's useful Symmetry and Proportion.—They were Eye-

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\* Gen. ix. 2.



witnesses of this double Change from Order to *Chaos*, when the *Deluge* came on; and from *Chaos* to Order again, when it went off; which would, as it were, exemplify the original Creation, and set before them a Sample of the divine Operations in that primitive, antemundane Work. So that *Noah* and his Family would, in the very strongest Manner that any of human Race ever were, be convinced from Facts passing under their own Observation, of the natural Perfections, the Power and Wisdom of God, the one, supreme, independent Author and Parent of all Things.

## S E C T. IV.

*On the Means of conveying this general System of Knowledge, from the Flood to the Dispersion.*

**H**AVING now, by the Guidance of *Moses*, investigated and settled the Materials of their Knowledge, and shewn that the Postdiluvian Stock might arise from their joining to all the original Treasure of the Antediluvian Sciences and Arts, these new but noble Acquisitions of their own; — I proceed to enquire into the Means of it's Conveyance to, and Preservation among succeeding Generations. This was communicated and transmitted by Tradition, from *Noah* and his Sons, as the original Knowledge was at first from *Adam* to *Noah*. All Mankind was once more reduced to the narrow Compass of one Family, which was under the Government of one of the greatest, wisest and best of Men.

I. The venerable Patriarch must now be of much greater Weight and Significancy, than when he was so unsuccessful a Preacher of Righteousness to the old World. In that former Office, many might despise his Admonitions, on Account of their Seniority, as being much elder than himself; many might disregard him on Account of their Distance from him in Blood, as the whole Line of *Cain*. Young Persons might slight him, in the Levity of Youth, or in Imitation of the Examples of elder Men; and all might conspire, both young and old, to discredit his Labours, however faithful, on Account of his unwelcome Attacks on the Exorbitancy of their Manners. — But, now, his Authority must have every Kind of Confirmation that was possible, in the Nature of Things. He was King and Priest of the new World, and every Thing center'd in his own Person, that could create proper Authority, either in Sacred or Civil Matters. — He had the parental Sovereignty and Authority, which has, in all Ages and Countries, both the most barbarous and most polished, been held in the highest Veneration. And the natural Affection of his own Children and Descendants would dispose them to pay a dutiful Regard to his Instructions, as well as Commands.

Besides



Besides these natural Foundations of Authority, which lay in the parental Relation, his own personal Qualifications must demand the greatest Respect. He must have been a Person of great intellectual Abilities, or he would not have been fit for the Work God called him to, as the Monitor of the old World. He had great Experience, having gone thro' such a Variety of Affairs, which required much Address and Discretion in the Management of. He must be supposed to have made great Progress in the Knowledge both of Men and Things, by conversing near six hundred Years, with the venerable Sages of Antiquity, *Methuselah, Lamech, &c.* Besides all these common Advantages for high Improvement, he had been favoured with many supernatural Revelations, and special Intercourses with Heaven; which must augment their Veneration for him; then finally, he was a Person of tried, approved, sterling Integrity, that no Temptation had ever shaken. This greatly qualified, and fully authorized Person, was the Instructor of the new World.

II. All his Family had been Eye-witnesses of the same astonishing Revolutions, and Partners with him in all these great Events; and must have joined with him in making Observations and Reflexions on all these wondrous Facts, in their Progress, from the Beginning to the End.—They were, no doubt, well disciplined and instructed before the Flood, earnestly cautioned and admonished while in the Ark; and, when they came out, (they, who were the only Remnant of those Millions, who possessed the Earth a Year before) we may be sure that *Noah* omitted nothing that could be necessary to affect them with the Views of the moving Scene, then before their Eyes; to fix those affecting Particulars in their Memory; and to inculcate the most edifying Observations upon, and Inferences from the whole instructive Prospect.—The Occasion was of such unexampled and striking Solemnity, that they must be as ready to hear, as he would be to speak the most pertinent Lectures on such a grand *Catastrophe*, which must appear to them all to be those of a Religious Kind; even such as set forth the Excellency of those Principles and Practices, which had been, thro' God's Goodness, their Security in the general Desolation; and the Malignity of those contrary ones, which had procured that Desolation on the rest.

III. They had, for several Years, no other Persons to converse with, but themselves, who had all seen the old World and the Flood. And they could scarce have any Subject to converse about, but what must revive the Memory, and renew the Mention of these past Transactions. *Noah* was not indeed like *Adam*, a new unexperienced Being, ignorant at first of every Thing, Civil or Religious, but what he had from Revelation. He had seen an improved World, and might have more Variety of Subjects of Conversation than our first Parents set out with. But yet they could hardly fix on any but would connect themselves with this disastrous Subject. If they spoke of their Ancestors,



Ancestors, either of their Virtues or their Vices, there could scarce be any avoiding some Remembrance of *the Flood*. If they spoke of their ancient Fields, or Palaces, now in Ruins, the Grandeur of ancient Cities, the Magnificence of the ancient Men of Renown, their Policies, States or Wars; their Wit, their Sciences, Power or Pride, every Thing would revive a Sense of their Destruction, and the sad Causes of it. If they turned their Thoughts to their past Friends, the young Men might look back to the agreeable Companions of their Youth, or *Noah* to the Companions of his riper Years, yet they must think and speak of them as now gone, in their lovely Bloom, or noble Strength, or venerable Age, swept away from the Face of the Earth, or absorbed in some dreadful, neighbouring Abyſs.

IV. Their daily Labours, and most common and necessary Employments, must perpetually renew both the Memory and the Mention of these great Events. This Subject would start up before them, every Day, as fresh Memorials of it would incessantly present themselves. Every Field they tilled would furnish Marks of the late general Calamity. The Bones of Men and other Animals, promiscuously buried in every Furrow they turned up, must awake their Hearts to the various proper Passions and Reflexions, which the melancholy Objects required. All their necessary Occupations in Agriculture, or the Pastoral Life, must thus be carried on among the Memorials of the Flood: So that they could scarce speak of their own Affairs, their Ground or Gardens, their Flocks or Herds, or any of their mechanic Cares, but the Story of the Deluge would join itself to the Subject, and in a Manner inseparably incorporate with every Conversation. And all this could scarce be so constant, but it must occasion frequent Reflections; and all these Occurrences in the *Day*, would administer Matter for their Conversation at *Night*, and dispose them to Devotion, in their Morning and Evening Oblations of Piety.

V. They had Children soon, and hereby there would soon be Occasion for repeating all the Principles of *Religion*, and all the wonderful Facts which enforced and illustrated them, in their Education.—*Shem* had *Arphaxad* two Years after the Flood, and it is like that the Encrease was parallel in the other Lines; so that the Education of their Children must come on, while the Facts were so recent, that they could be related very minutely and circumstantially, in all the three Houses, at the same Time. Here parental Affections would naturally operate, and excite them to parental Care, in the educating of the new Generation; as we observed, concerning *Adam* before, and as they are found among all Mankind since. Even Parents of a vicious Character will commonly take Care to instruct their Children in such Knowledge as they themselves have a Value for; and the Fathers of the Postdiluvian World could not have much to instruct their Children in, for many Years, except the History of the Deluge, and their Observations upon it.

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But as *Noah* was a Person of such conspicuous Piety and Virtue, we may assuredly conclude, that he would see all the rising Generation carefully instructed in the Principles of *Religion*. Their young Minds, under such an Inspector of their Education, would be furnished with a Treasure of all the most useful Principles, as to the Being and Perfections of God; his universal Dominion, and actual Providence and Government over all Things; his Love of Virtue and Goodness, and infinite Detestation of all Sin. All these important Doctrines would be illustrated by the many memorable Facts which the Instructors had to relate of their own Knowledge, even from the Beginning. —The Patriarch could give the History of the Creation, and first State of Mankind, their original Happiness, and their Fall from it, by sinning against God; as he had it from his own Father, and many other Ancestors who all had it from *Adam's* own Mouth. *Noah* and all his Family could relate of their own Knowledge many Events, very much parallel to these more ancient ones, and very much tending to confirm their Credibility. They could inform their Children how very full of People the old World was; how very wicked they were in their Lives; how God declared his awful Purpose of destroying them for their Wickedness, if they did not repent, and reform their flagitious Manners. How God declared beforehand his gracious Intention of preserving *Noah* and his Family; and directed them to the Methods of their Preservation. And that, to demonstrate his Power, Wisdom, and Righteousness, he sent such a Deluge of Waters as put the whole Frame of Nature out of Order; and yet, when he pleased, set it all right again, in that wonderful Regularity, in which they then beheld it, with Mountains and Plains, Springs and Rivers, as they saw it with their own Eyes.

VI. The Tradition of the Flood could be confirmed by Sight, which would in a Manner make them Eye-witnesses. It is true indeed that these Facts were properly but Tradition to *Arphaxad*, and all the young Generations; they must take their Father's Words for it, pretty much like the Evidence which *Adam* gave about the Creation, the State of Innocency, the Fall, the promised Seed, and the like. But then, they could have no rational Ground to suspect that all the Parents would combine to impose on all their Children, in such a strange Story as that of the Flood.

But, as I observe here, they could be brought to the Ark to survey it all over, and receive Intelligence of the Uses of every Part of the Fabric. Many Parts and Timbers of that vast Edifice, would probably be too heavy for *Noah* and his Sons to lift and move; which must convince their Children that there had been more Men in the World, when the Ark was built, than at the Time of their Education. Again; probably there was no such Wood growing on the Mount *Ararat*, as that of which the Ark was built, which must further satisfy them when they came to reason, as to the Truth of the parental Report,



port, that the Ark was brought by Water from some other Parts, where such Wood commonly grew.—Further, there would necessarily remain for many Years, such external, visible Footsteps of the Deluge on the Face of the whole Earth, where-ever they came, that they must meet with daily Confirmations of the History from their own Observations. The Bones of Men and all other Animals, aquatic as well as terrene, scattered promiscuously up and down, the Ruins of Palaces, Cities, and other great Works, would demonstrate to the young Enquirers, when they arrived at Strength of Reason, that there had been such a Desolation by Water; and that the Nature of the Ruins would not admit that it should have happened by War or Fire.

We see in every Age, that either oral Tradition, or written History, are greatly confirmed by any Remains of those ancient Facts, which are related, tho' those Remains are now only in Ruins. Obscure ancient Histories are often cleared up by such ruinous Remains.—No Body now questions the Story of the *Romans* fortifying the middle Parts of this Island against the *Caledonians*, or other Northern People, by Walls and Ramparts raised across it, since there are such grand Ruins of them still visible. No one questions but it was the Work of the *Romans*, since there are so many *Roman* Inscriptions found in the Ruins, upon Altars, Tomb-Stones, and the like. And whatever former Doubts there might be among Antiquaries, as to the Emperors who built them, thro' the Obscurity of Historians; the Inscriptions found in the *Roman* Wall in *Scotland*, demonstrate that Wall to have been the Work of *Antoninus Pius*, and not the Work of any other Emperor; and that therefore the other noble Ruins, stretching from *Newcastle* to *Carlisle*, are the Remains of *Adrian* and *Severus's* Walls, since these Emperors are said by *Historians* to have performed such Works. As our learned *Horsley* has clearly made out in his matchless Work, *Brittan. Romana*.—In like Manner, the Desolation made by the Flood, the Bones of Fishes and Water-Animals, in great Abundance, left on the higher Grounds, would be a strong Confirmation of all the Traditions concerning it, for a great Number of Years. So that I think, not only *Arphaxad* and his Contemporaries, but *Salah*, *Heber*, and *Peleg*, would have a cogent Confirmation of the History of the *Deluge*, by the remaining Marks and visible Traces of it, which they might daily observe.

VII. All that were come to Age, before the Dispersion, must have had sufficient Opportunities of Instruction in *Religion*, as well as all other necessary Branches of Knowledge. *Noah*, *Shem*, *Arphaxad*, *Salah*, and *Heber*, were all alive, according to the express Testimony of *Moses*, till after the Dispersion; for they all of them lived longer than *Peleg*, in whose Days the Dispersion was. And, in Parity of Reason, it may be supposed, that all the parallel Generations of the other Lines of *Ham* and *Japhet* were alive too.—Now they being in the Vigour and Strength of their Faculties, for the greatest Part of that Time; they could scarce be suspected to connive at the  
Negligence



Negligence of the younger Families, if they should have degenerated into Carelessness in the Education of their Children. All down to *Terab* must, in great Probability, have been brought up under the *Patriarch's* general Care and Inspection. He as King and Priest of the new World, would, probably, maintain stated Sacrifices and Sabbaths. To these public Solemnities they might, for many Years resort, without any great Inconveniency, either as to Distance or Numbers; and hereby they would be habituated to Religious Solemnities, before they would be under any Necessity to scatter.—*Arphaxad* was born in the 2d Year after the Flood, *Salah* in the 37th, *Heber* in the 67th, and *Peleg* in the 101st, and in his Days the Earth was divided. *Reu*, *Serug*, *Nabor*, and *Terab* were all born before the Death of *Noah*; and, for any Thing that appears in the *Mosaic* History, they were all born before the Dispersion. And if so, then it is manifest that they might, all of them, have sufficient Opportunity of being instructed by *Noah* himself, who had long conversed with the *Ancient Patriarchs*, who had lived with *Adam*, and might have had long and frequent Conversation with *Adam*, on Religious Subjects. And, as *Adam* was growing old, when *Methuselah* and his Contemporaries could converse with him, we may reasonably conclude that his Taste would be more generally for such Subjects, as being most suitable for the Decline of Life.

The following Table, according to the *Hebrew Chronology*, will set forth the Time of their several Births and Deaths from the Flood.

BORN	after the Flood.	DIED.
<i>Noah</i>	- - - - -	350
<i>Shem</i>	- - - - -	502
<i>Arphaxad</i>	- 2 - - -	440
<i>Salah</i>	- 37 - - -	470
<i>Heber</i>	- 67 - - -	531
<i>Peleg</i>	- 101 - - -	340
<i>Reu</i>	- 131 - - -	370
<i>Serug</i>	- 163 - - -	393
<i>Nabor</i>	- 193 - - -	341
<i>Terab</i>	- 222 - - -	427
<i>Abraham</i>	- 352 - - -	527
<i>Isaac</i>	- 452 - - -	
<i>Jacob</i>	- 512 - - -	

It is obvious, by this Table, that all the *Patriarchs* mentioned by *Moses*, in the lineal Succession of Generations, from *Noah* to *Terab*, were alive many Years after the Birth of *Terab*, the last that seems to be of the eldest Sons. And, supposing *Terab* to be a young Man, in the Prime of his Youth, about 20 Years of Age, when he went off with his Ancestors, *Peleg*, *Reu*, *Serug*, and



*Nabor*, in the general Dispersion; then, not only all the elder Persons here named, but *Terah himself* might have had competent Advantages, in the common Course of Things, of being instructed in the Principles of Religion, by *Noah* and *Shem*, who had both of them been Eye-witnesses of the Deluge.

## C H A P. VI.

*Tradition from the Dispersion to Moses.*

**R**ELIGIOUS Tradition must have been preserved in a considerable Degree of Perfection, till the Time of the Dispersion, for the Reasons fully insisted on, in the former Part, viz. That the Eye-witnesses of these great Events, which were a Foundation of these Religious Instructions, were all alive at the Dispersion; that they were of such pious Dispositions, that they would not suffer this Sort of Knowledge to be neglected; and that their Posterity lived in such Vicinity to the stated Residence of the Patriarchs, that they could have frequent Opportunities of Converse with them, and might fall in the Way of their Animadversions, and their Approbation or Reprehension, as they deserved, or needed in their general Way of Life.

I must remark again, that we have no more Assistance from ancient *Pagan* Writers in this Period, than in any that we have examined before. There is not so much as an Hint about the general Dispersion, nor indeed could any be expected, according to the *Pagan Theogonics*, of most celebrated Authority. For the prevailing Notion of *Paganism* being this, that Mankind arose from the *Earth*, by Virtue of the prolific Nature of the *Soil*, or Heat of a genial Sun; It is plain that these Powers of Nature might be exerted in *Egypt* and *Greece*, in East and West, at the same Time. The *αυτοχθόνες* might be in every Country, perhaps propagated near the same Time, and so would be growing into an hundred different native Colonies, in the different prolific Soils and Climates, at the same Time; they might grow or encrease, as they sprung, as Cotemporary Nations. Accordingly, the Notion of a general Dispersion, is a Stranger to *Pagan* Antiquity; and all Disputes about the Time and Circumstances of it, are confined to *Jewish* or *Christian* Antiquaries, and Chronologers.—There being then no ancient History, but that of *Moses*, which gives any Intimation of this great Event of a *general Dispersion*; we must adjust the Calculation of the Time *when* it happened, and the Circumstances with *which* it was attended; by joining the Relations of *Moses* to the faithful Criticisms of *Common Sense*.

I now proceed to enquire into the *Nature* and the *Time* of this great Event of the *general Dispersion of Mankind*, as far as it can be gathered from the *Hebrew Historian*, and determined by the *Nature* and *Circumstances*, and common



common Reason of Things.—Many Difficulties have been alledged to attend the *Mosaic* Account of this great Transaction, and as I have observed all these Difficulties are started by *Jewish* or *Christian* Writers, or *Deists*, who have taken their Intelligence from this great Original, *Moses*. But I am perswaded none of these Difficulties are insuperable, if Persons would insist on these Things *only*, which *Moses* relates, and take in *all* which he *doth* relate, and reason upon them as to those Things which he *doth* not descend to, according to the common Principles of human Nature.—The general Account, which he gives of this memorable and important Affair, is comprehended in these Particulars.

I. That all the World descended from *Noah*, and that the whole Earth was peopled by the Posterity of his three Sons.

II. That Mankind was, in some peculiar Manner, separated and divided in the Days of *Peleg*.

III. That *Noah*, his three Sons, and many of the Longeval *Patriarchs*, were alive at the Time of this Dispersion, or Division.

IV. That this Division of Mankind was finished, at the Time of the Confusion of Languages.

All these Things, I think, *Moses* historically relates, at one Time or other, tho' not altogether; for the clear Explication of this whole History in all it's Circumstances, I shall offer the following Things.

I. This Division, or Separation of Mankind could not, in the Nature of Things, be a speedy Work, or take place very soon after the Flood. *Noah* and his Sons would, for a considerable Time, be under a Necessity of keeping together, very much like the Members of one Family.

1. When they came out of the Ark, accompanied with all the Animals, which had been preserved along with them, it would be natural to take a Survey of the Mountain, and the adjacent Country, every Way. The Ark certainly rested on very high Land; because it was so long a-ground, before the Land was drained sufficiently, to be convenient for them and the inferior Creatures, which were with them, to go out of the Ark.

The Animals might probably shape their Course according to their Nature, very differently; some towards the higher, and some towards the lower Ground; and might frequently return to *Noah*, which might point out the Difficulties they met with, either in going up or down, according to the several Situations, which Instinct directed them to. Instructed by these Intimations, and his own Surveys of the Ground, he would doubtless choose that Declivity of Mount *Ararat*, which he found most practicable and easy of



Descent; and had the most inviting Prospect of a convenient Country, extending below to settle himself in.

2. Which Way he took we cannot certainly determine, as we know not on what Part of the Mountains of *Ararat* the Ark rested. And the first Intimation of the Situation of Mankind, that *Moses* takes notice of, is at the Dispersion, when he observes a Journeying from the East to *Sbinar*. This seems to suggest that *Noah* found the most convenient Descent from *Ararat*, or the most inviting Prospect of the Country towards the East, because there Mankind was settled, at the Time of the famous Journey to *Sbinan*. And I should think, that if *Ararat* be the Mountains of *Armenia*,\* there would have been as good a Descent from those Mountains, directly South into *Sbinan*, by the Course of the River to it's grand Plains of *Babylonia*; as to march first to the East, and then from the East to those Plains.

3. But which Way soever he came down, it cannot be supposed that he would go far from the Foot of the Mountain at first. He would fix in some Place of convenient Distance, that he might not have his necessary Instruments for Husbandry, nor his Conveniences for Tents and other domestic Uses, very far to carry, at one Station or March, as we may say.

4. Further, as they were Persons of full Experience in all Rural Affairs, and had the whole Earth before them, we may reasonably imagine that they would incline to move about, for some Time, make Observations of the Country around them, and not settle in any Situation, but such as should be most promising for Tillage and Pastorage, and appear sufficiently commodious, both for Health, Plenty and Pleasure.

5. Again; to whatever Distance, or in whatever Direction they might remove, whatever Rivers or Springs, beautiful Hills, or extended Plains, invited them to the Choice of their Settlement, this is obvious that they must have been near together, so as to unite in their whole Rural Occupations, for a considerable Time, their common *Conveniency*, as well *Security*, would absolutely require such an Union of Labours, and Nearness of Situation.—Their *Conveniency* would require it, for all their Hands would be few enough for performing their necessary Work. In such a desolated and ruinous State of Nature, where the Surface of the Earth must have been so much torn and broke by the Eruptions of the Waters at first, their impetuous Torrents from the higher Grounds, and their Ebbing off afterwards; a great deal of Labour must have been necessary for clearing the Ground, to make it fit for Tillage; for tilling a Quantity sufficient for their Grain, Roots and Herbs; to keep their Fields and Gardens from the promiscuous Growths, which might shoot up in their new Plantation; where such Variety of the *Semina* of Weeds and the Roots of Plants must have been casually cast together.—A proportionable Care must have been necessary about their Flocks and Herds, and all the domestic Animals for Food and Clothing, and the Beasts for Labour, to manage

\* *Patrick in Loc.*



nage them for their several Uses to Man; and again to preserve their Infant-Plantations for their Cattle, and the Cattle from the Beasts of Prey.—Again; they could scarce catch a Sheep, or Goat, for Sacrifice, Food, or Wool, without joining together. So that there could be no Separation from each other for a considerable Time.

6. Accordingly, they were all together at the Time of *Noah's* Transgression.—*Noah* was discovered in an indecent Posture, in his own Tent, by his Grandson *Canaan*, as the *Rabbins* suppose. *Theodoret* on *Quæst.* 57. on *Genesis* ascribes the Discovery to *Canaan*. *Bochart* notes (in *Peleg.* Lib. iv. chap. 37.) That this Observation is to be met with in several *Rabbinical* Authors, much more ancient than *Theodoret*. And I think there is this manifest Reason, which will determine the Matter, that *Canaan* was born at that Time. For *Ham* would never have called a Son then unborn, by this ominous Name of *Canaan*, to which a Curse or Execration was annexed, therefore he was named *Canaan* before that Accident happened. And, as *Ham* had, probably, other Sons, *Canaan* most likely was some Way particularly concerned in this undutiful Behaviour towards *Noah*.—The Age of *Canaan* at this Time cannot be determined, but he was plainly old enough to carry Tales to his Father of what he had seen. *Ham* was so near, that the Youth could soon inform him of what he had discovered. He, instead of discouraging, or reprehending his Son, made a misbecoming Jest of it to his Brothers, *Shem* and *Japhet*. They were so near at Hand, as to perform the dutiful Office of covering their Father, and all this was transacted before he awoke. So that it is manifest they all lived together at that Time. *Noah* might discover the Matter, by finding a Garment laid over him, belonging to *Japhet*, or *Shem*,\* which might put him upon Enquiry into the Circumstances of the Story, and so occasion that just Resentment of *Ham's* disrespectful, undutiful Behaviour; and, if *Canaan* was the first Informer, it might procure that Curse upon him, on Account of that Indecency and Undutifulness of Disposition, which this Action indicated. But, however this was, they all at that Time lived near together.

7. In the Year after the Flood 37, *Arphaxad* married. In the Year 39, the second Sons might marry, in the Year 41, the third Sons in each Line; and so they might come to have separate Tents, for the Habitations of the different Families; but still they must necessarily be near each other. They could have no mercenary Mechanics, or Servants, and therefore they must all be fully employed; and generally join their Strength for all greater Work. And probably they could not have Strength enough to build Houses, till the younger Generations were grown up for their Assistance.—In the 67th Year of the *Æra* of the Deluge, *Salah* and his Contemporaries of the other Lines set up new Families. And in 101, *Heber* and his Contemporaries, when *Peleg* was born, in whose Days the Earth was divided. All this while they lived in a Vicinity of Habitation, which would be most commodious for their mutual assisting each.

\* *Patrick* in *Lgc.*



each other, and their Security from the wild Beasts. For we may suppose that those fierce Animals, which were familiar with them by being in the Ark, would in the Course of Nature be all dead long before 101. and the young ones would grow up with their natural Fierceness.

## S E C T. I.

*On the Improvement of an Original, or Mother Country, before the Dispersion.*

**W**HILE they continued near together, a necessary Consequence of this Vicinity would be that the Country, in which they resided, would have been greatly improved before the Dispersion.

1. Their Circumstances would not allow them to be idle. Necessity would impell them to Industry, in order to provide Food and Raiment, and the other Necessaries for their growing Offspring. Their Children in Infancy and Childhood must be provided for, by the Labour of their Parents, while they were incapable of taking their Share in the Labours of the Plantation; and, soon after they were capable of assisting their Parents, they married themselves; and had a new Generation to take Care of, which would require new Ground to be improved by themselves. *Arphaxad* had a Son in the 35th Year of his Life, and 35 Years old may be reasonably presumed to be early *Youth* in him, who lived to 438 Years of Age; correspondent to about 16 in our Age of 70 Years, so that they could not do much in the original Plantation.

2. Again; the first Couples continued to have young Children, after their own Sons, Grandsons, and Great Grandsons, &c. had severally Families of their own; and hereby the Country must gradually encrease in Improvements, and enlarge in Extent of cultivated Land.

3. They might perhaps live in Tents, or moveable Dwellings for some Years; while they were searching and observing the Land for the most commodious Situation, in which to settle. But when they found such a Situation, accommodated with the Conveniences of Air and Water, Wood, Soil and the like, promising for Health, Plenty and Pleasure, they would naturally be inclined to settle, and apply themselves to greater Improvements and a more fixed Life.

4. They would then think of building Houses, as these would be much more convenient than Tents; and why may we not suppose them to build good Houses when the Materials were so plentiful? Why should they cut a mean Tree for their Building, when they had Plenty of good ones? Why should



should they wander in an unsettled State, with their young Families, when there could be no Necessity for it? It is very natural to suppose, that they would soon after their Settlement have beautiful Villa's, Vineyards, Orchards, and Gardens, interspersed through the whole Country, among their Fields and Pastures.

5. And there might, probably, be several good Towns and Cities, especially near the ordinary Residence of *Noah* and his Sons; which might be as Places of Resort for public Justice, and to which they might repair for celebrating Religious Worship, and for Instruction in Religion and the Sciences,\* equivalent to public Halls of Justice, Temples and Colleges in modern Times.

6. It cannot well be imagined, when once they had found such a commodious Situation, that they should have been so unreasonably fickle, to leave almost every Year the Fields which they had cultivated, the Vineyards, Orchards and Gardens, which they had planted, and the good Houses which they had built; and travel on to new, uncultivated Ground. This would be losing their former Labour, renouncing the Ease and Pleasure which they had purchased, by former Care and Pains; and entering into the Hardships and Difficulties of an Infant-Plantation. This Conduct would not have been only without Reason, but contrary to all Reason and good Sense.—From all these Considerations it is evident that there would have been a grand capital Plantation, or Mother Country, which must have been before the Dispersion a noble Land, and no where unimproved, but in it's Skirts and Borders.

## S E C T. II.

### *On the Conveniency and Necessity of a Dispersion.*

**T**H E Division or Separation of Mankind from this fine Country, could not come to pass, till there was some apparent Necessity for it, or apparent Conveniency in it.

1. We have not here any direct Informations of *History*, as to the Circumstances, or Numbers of the Inhabitants, in the Mother Country, before they separated. But common Reason and Prudence being the same in all Ages, if we can imagine what would put us upon a Separation from a cultivated Country, when there is a sufficient uncultivated one to repair to, we may form probable Conjectures of the Motives which influenced them.—Whether this great primitive Dispersion was chosen by themselves, or ordered and directed by

\* History, or Tradition of Doctrines and Facts, must have been the principal Learning of those early Ages before Letters; and *Noah* and his Sons, the great Teachers or Professors. But this Work would be chiefly in the Hands of *Noah*; because he would be most at Leisure, having no Children after the Flood.



by *Noah*, there must have been some apparent Conveniences, which would induce *them* to desire it, or *him* to order and enjoin it.

2. There could methinks be no *Necessity* for this Separation, till they either fell into Jealousies and Emulations, about their Shares in the Mother Country, already greatly improved; or that they were straitened for Room.—The first might happen from the same Causes, which produce similar Contests, and Convulsions in Societies, to this Day. Pride, Avarice, Sloth, Frowardness, and Ill-temper, might create Discontents, even under the most prudent Government of the *Patriarch* himself. But yet, this alone could scarce have made any considerable Separation, much less a *regular* one. *Noah's* unexceptionable Authority would seem sufficient to have regulated and composed these occasional Animosities.—As to the latter; they might be straitened for Room many Ways. The fine Country, in which they had settled, might terminate in Mountains, or rocky Ground, on one Hand; or Marshes, Fens, or other naturally unimproveable and barren Ground, on another; or be bounded by great Rivers of difficult Passage, which might quite separate the Colony, which crossed them, from the main Body of the People, and from the Benefit of the *Patriarch's* Inspection. The Mother Country becoming hereby insensibly too narrow for them, the youngest Families might want convenient Ground to settle upon and improve. And being thus incommoded, and knowing there was Land enough at a Distance, with Conveniences of Soil and Situation, they might perceive Advantages in a Separation.

3. There might be further Advantages observed by *Noah*, which younger People might not attend to, or consider, *viz.* That the Earth might be more equally inhabited, as soon as it should be possible, that they might not learn to despise those Countries, in which they were destined by Providence to settle, by staying longer than was necessary in the *Mother Country*, which must be improving to a greater Perfection every Year.—The Separation might therefore have been ordered by *Noah*, before it was become absolutely necessary, especially to be a *general* Separation. Even as soon as he discerned it to be most for the general Good; and perhaps before they came to desire it themselves.

4. But it is to be considered, that in the original Settlement, there were many Conveniences besides *Plenty*, such as the Comforts of *regular* Society, and *orderly* Government, and a general *Security* from Force or Fraud, under the highest Authority, even the *Patriarchal*. Each Colony would desire to have these Privileges, as nearly resembling the original Country, as they could; therefore there must be both Men of *Experience* and *Authority*, and also sufficient *Numbers* in each, in order to the Happiness of the several Colonies.—In a *general* Dispersion, into how many Tribes soever they divided, this was first and essentially *necessary*, that they should have sufficient *Numbers* under each Leader of the Colony, for the Security and Strength of the Colony within itself, against wild Beasts and other Contingences; such as  
Sickness



Sickness and bad Accidents, by which many might be frequently disabled.—There must be a sufficient Number of *useful* and *able* Hands, grown Persons in their Vigour and Activity, to clear the Ground they fixed upon, from the Incumbrances which had been growing up in it, ever since the Flood; to cut down such Woods and Thickets as rendered it impracticable for Agriculture, and to plow, sow, and manage their new Fields.—Further, as they were to withdraw from a *populous* and *well ordered* Country, in which there must have been much Comfort in *Society* and *Conversation*, as well as *Regularity* in Things Sacred and Civil; they would doubtless go away in Kindreds, under some great Ancestor, who might have the *Parental Authority* over his Colony, resembling *Noah's* Government over the whole.—And then this Union of Nature and Blood would lay a Foundation for greater Friendship among them, in the Separation. Those who came out together being Relations, and many of them Acquaintance, who had been in Familiarities and Friendships before, would more readily fall into the Pleasures and Intimacies of Society in their Migration.—But, whether the Plan for the general Dispersion was projected at their own Desire, or it proceeded from the Order and Direction of *Noah*, there would, as I have noted, be this Qualification necessary for the comfortable Undertaking of it, that there should be sufficient *Numbers* for each Colony, for their mutual Satisfaction in *Society*, and for *Strength* and *Security* in all common Emergences. So that a *general* Dispersion could not have been chosen, till Mankind was multiplied to a considerable Number.—It is therefore difficult to conceive the Reason of our learned Sir *J. Marsham's* Opinion. \* “It cannot be doubted, but that a great Part of the World was inhabited before *Peleg's* Age”.† *Perizonius* justly censures this Opinion, as void of the very Appearance of Reason.‡

## S E C T. III.

*The general Dispersion, one Event belonging to one Period.*

**T**H E Dispersion or Separation of Mankind was *one* great *Event*, belonging to one particular *Period* of Time. It was an Event which was begun and carried to Perfection in *Peleg's* Days.

1. Here we have express *History*, as to the Time, when it happened, in *Peleg's* Days the Earth was divided. It was one *general* Division of the Earth, in which all Mankind was concerned. They were all divided into Tribes, or Families, under a parental Chief, or Leader; and then dispersed

\* *Canon. Chronic.* p. 23.

† *Marsh. Can. Chron.* cum enim Phaleg sit Noachi Trinepos, dubitari non potest, Quin Terrarum Orbis pars magna illius Ætate dudum habitata fuerit.

‡ *Origen. Babylonic.* p. 286.



into different Regions, to lay a Foundation for different Nations, which in Process of Time should be built up. *Gen. x. 5. By these were the Isles of the Gentiles divided in their Lands, every one after his Tongue, after their Families, in their Nations.*

2. It was a Division of a *singular* Kind, such as never came to pass in any other Period of the World, but this only. *In Peleg's Days the Earth was divided. Gen. x. 25.* Therefore this general Division, of which *Moses* here speaks, was not either before or after *Peleg's Days*, (not before, according to *Sir John Marsham*, not after, according to *Spanheim*.) It was so far the Transaction of that particular determinate Time, that every Colony's going off from the *Mother Country*, and separating from those who stayed in it, was to be considered as a Branch of the same great Plan, a Part of one great Work, allotted to that Period of Time, *Peleg's Life*. There are, I think, but two Senses, in which this Division, mentioned by *Moses*, can be understood.—Either that it was begun in *Peleg's Days*, and carried on gradually, as Families multiplied. Or that it was begun and finished, as one great Plan, in *his Days*.—If we understand this Division in this Sense, that it *was begun* in the Days of *Peleg*, and then *gradually* carried on, as Families multiplied, and growing Numbers required. This could not be said to be a Transaction belonging to *Peleg's Days*, in any *peculiar* Sense.\* For new Nations were setting up, and new Countries were planting, in almost every Age; and continued long after *Peleg's Death*. The Nations of *Moab* and *Ammon*, the *Arabs* from *Ishmael*, the Nations of *Edom* and *Israel*, were planted and settled long after the Time here mentioned. Besides, if there was no more meant by this Division, but this *gradual*, successive Separation of Families, as they wanted Room; this could scarce be a Transaction *worthy* to be recorded among the memorable and remarkable Events of *Antiquity*; for it cannot be thought remarkable in any Age. Whereas this was a very *memorable Event*, it was the Occasion of *Heber's* naming his Son from it, and is several Times mentioned in the Old Testament History.—But, if we take it in this Sense, that it was begun and *finished* as *one* great Work, in the Days of *Peleg*, then it will appear *worthy* of the Sacred Historian to record it, as a *very remarkable Event*; for very memorable it surely was, that the several Colonies, which were to disperse for the peopling of the World, should go out so *near together*; when they could not sure be all *alike* straitened in the *Mother Country*. Some of the *elder* Families, such as *Peleg*, might no doubt have convenient Settlements in the original Country, tho' some of the *younger* Sort might be a little incommoded.—I add further, that, if the dividing the Earth was a *general* Dispersion, then it must have been ordered very near the *same Time*, to prevent Murmurings or any Suspicions of Partiality. If they went off each for their own Convenience, gradually, as they wanted Room, according to the Judgment of the learned *Spanheim*.† I own there could be no Foundation for such

\* *Perizon. Origin. Babylon.*

† *Chronol. Sacra. 156 Col. non Simul et Semel sed Successive.*



such Suspensions. But, if the Dispersion was *general* and a *public* Act, it must be executed, as near as could be, at the same Time. Those, who should be *first* sent out into the wide World, might be apt to complain, that they should be as it were banished from their pleasant, native Land, while *others* of the same Age were permitted to stay at home. I do not, indeed, see a Necessity that every Tribe should go away, in the very same Month or Year; but only that they should be all *engaged* in the Design, near the same Time, and all preparing for it; tho' some might be *sooner* ready than others, according to the different Genius and Activity of the Leaders, their different Propensions to the Work, their Situation, or other Circumstances, which cannot now be known.

## S E C T. IV.

*On the general Dispersion, being under the Direction of Noah.*

**T**HIS one great Event, the general Dispersion of Mankind, was under the *supreme* Direction of *Noah*, tho' assisted by his Sons, and the other *Patriarchs*, who stayed with him in the Mother Country. — I own, we have no direct History of this Matter, *Moses* doth not, in Words, assert this, but then he asserts these Things, from which (I think) this may be inferred. He informs us that *Noah* lived some Years after *Peleg's* Death, and therefore was alive the whole Time of the *Dispersion*; which was begun and finished in *Peleg's* Days, and that he was the Father of the whole World. Here we must reason from common Principles on the then State of Mankind.

1. As this was a *general* Division of the Children of Men, who were all descended from him, as their *common Father*; no Person, but the *great Patriarch* himself, could be like to have *such an Authority*, as would be acknowledged by them all. He was the King and Father of the whole Race. They had been accustomed to reverence his Authority, and obey his Government, both *Regal* and *Patriarchal*; and would therefore, without doubt, pay the highest Deference and Regard to him, and to any useful Undertaking which he recommended.

2. Again; he knew what Multitudes the Earth had maintained before the Flood, and observed it to be, at least, as fruitful after as before; and that his own Posterity were destined by Providence to people it in due Time; and so might be more likely, by these Representations of Things of his own Knowledge, to reconcile them to the Thoughts of a *Dispersion*.

3. We may, indeed, allow that the more thinking Part of the People would be aware of it, that there would be a Necessity of spreading further and further, in a little Time. They saw themselves, that the Earth abounded with fruitful Ground; and they might easily apprehend, that there must be



be many other Countries, as good in Nature as that, in which they were settled, which lay waste without Culture, or Inhabitants. They might also apprehend that the Earth would be still more and more incumbered with wild Productions of Nature, the longer it was let alone; and therefore it might soon be convenient to disperse themselves.

4. All these Considerations might induce many of a more enterprising Genius, to be *willing* to undertake the Expedition. But then *many*, from want of Fore-sight, from Sloth and a Love of Ease, or of the ancient Settlement, might be *backward* to any such Undertaking, so that it would probably be almost impracticable to get a *general* Dispersion forward, in an orderly and regular Way, without a very ample and full Authority.

5. And I do not see that any, but *Noah* and his Sons, could be equal to so difficult a Province. But as they were all Parties in the Happiness of the World; *Noah*, the Father of all, and *Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japhet*, the Fathers of each great Tribe, every one would be like to regard their joint Commands, or Advice. So that, on the whole, it is most probable, that this great Revolution, called by all Historians, the *Dispersion*, by Way of Eminence, was planned and methodized, regulated and conducted, finally to its Execution, under the Care and Inspection of *Noah* and his Sons.—Bishop *Patrick* observes, on *Gen. x. 5.* “That, by this Account of their being divided into Nations, according to their Families and Tongues, it appears, that this great Division of the Earth was made *orderly*, and not by a *confused*, irregular Dispersion, where every one went where he listed.”

## S E C T. V.

*On the general Dispersion finished by the Confusion of Languages.*

**T**HE general Dispersion was *completed* at, or by, the Confusion of Languages, for the whole Earth was never *after* of the same Tongue.—*Moses* speaks of a *general Division* of the Earth, in the Days of *Peleg*, and of a *Dispersion* from *Babel*, brought about by the Confusion of Languages. Now I do not apprehend that the *Historian* speaks of one, and the same *general* Dispersion, accomplished at the same Time; but he relates the *latter*, as the completing of the *former*.—The Eleventh Chapter of *Genesis* is a methodical Continuation of the History of the general Division of the Earth, till it was completed by the Confusion of Tongues.

1. When *Noah* had settled all Things for the orderly Separation of Mankind, in convenient Divisions, and had appointed the Leaders of the Colonies, and the Tribes which should accompany them, and had given his final Instructions,



Instructions, they all obsequiously complied, and went off, in their several Divisions, East, West, North and South, on the known Design of peopling the Earth; and so are heard of no more, as to this general Transaction. When all were thus going off the *Mother Country*, who were appointed to leave it; those, who were allotted for this *Western Expedition* proceeded for some Time, according to the general Directions, for they journeyed from the East, till they arrived at the Plains of *Shinaar*. But, when they came there, something *peculiar* in their Case and Conduct happened, which the *Hebrew Historian* proceeds to relate, in order of Time. This History is contained in the eleventh Chapter of *Genesis*, the nine first Verses. And to state this History, and come at the true Sense of it, as clearly as we are able, we shall offer the following Observations.

1. *Moses* takes Notice, by Way of Introduction, that the *whole Earth was of one Language, or Lip, and of one Speech*, which it is very reasonable to suppose they should be, when they were so lately separated from the original Country. And this was exceeding pertinent to observe, when he was going to relate so remarkable an Event, as the Confusion of Tongues.—The following *History* would have wanted some Degrees both of Perspicuity and Beauty, without this introductory Remark. This Observation was not, therefore, to intimate that *all the Earth was at Shinaar*, but to introduce this History of the Confusion of Languages which happened there. And, in this View, it was very proper to observe that the whole Earth was of one Lip and Speech before that Time. And, indeed, if we understand this of a *miraculous Variety*, introduced into their Language, it was necessary to take Notice of this Fact, that all the Earth was of one Tongue before; for otherwise it might have been suspected, that this Variety was introduced by Strangers coming among them unobserved, who used different Languages.—But further; I think the very Observation of this Sameness of Language, implies that there had been a Separation of Mankind *before* this Event happened. For otherwise, it could scarce have been possible that they should speak different Languages, who were educated by *Noah* and his Sons, and had lived all together in one Country to that Time.

Mr. *Lellen* gives a singular Interpretation of this Text, that they were all of one Lip שפה *Saphab*, that is, that they were unanimous in one *Agreement*, or Confederacy. *Le Clerc*. in *Gen. xi. 1, 7.* in a Design afterwards named, of erecting one great *Metropolis* of the World. But the Narration, which follows, of this great Event, seems to prove this Interpretation to be an unnatural one. The learned *Dr. Chapman* argues against this Interpretation, from the same Word being made use of, in *ver. 7.* in which Verse this Turn would not be good Sense. “There is, says he, a Passage, a little lower, which “seems to be a clear and indisputable Confutation of it, *ver. 7.* Let us go “down, and there confound *their Language*, that they may not understand “one another’s *Speech*. These last Words have a singular Weight and Authority



“thority in them, and serve not only to overthrow Mr. *Le Clerc*, but to  
 “establish also the general Opinion, that the Confusion of Languages was  
 “really an Act of divine Power and Wrath. The *Hebrew* Word, which we  
 “translate *Speech*, is *Saphab*, as in the Beginning of this 7th and 1st Verse,  
 “*Lip*. Now substitute in this Place Mr. *Le Clerc*’s *Agreement* or *Confederacy*,  
 “and then the Passage will run thus, that they may not understand one ano-  
 “ther’s *Confederacy*. Where is the Sense? This Argument, says our learned  
 “Author, I confess seems to me unanswerable.”\*

It was, then, very proper to take Notice that the whole Earth was of one  
*Tongue*, that the Miracle, of the introduced Variety, might be more conspi-  
 cuous; and was also a most pertinent *Exordium* to the History of this Event,  
 tho’ he was but speaking of one Part of Mankind, since the whole Earth  
 should never be entirely of one Tongue any more. After this introductory  
 Observation, *Moses* proceeds to relate particularly what befell them, viz. This  
 Division of Mankind, with Respect to their Language, and also their other  
 Proceedings, which made that extraordinary Step of Providence necessary.  
 And it came to pass, as *they journeyed from the East*, that *they found* a Plain, in  
 the Land of *Shinaar*, and *they dwelt* there. *Gen. xi. 2*. This is the only ori-  
 ginal History of this memorable Event, and therefore it must be determined  
 from this Passage. And the principal Questions which arise are these, (*First*)  
*Who* these Travellers were? And (*Secondly*) of *what Nature* was their Travel-  
 ling, or Journeying?

1. *Who* were these *Journiers*, who travelled from the East to *Shinaar*? It can-  
 not be understood to mean *Noah* and his Sons.—That *they* travelled from *Ara-  
 rat* to *Shinaar* before they settled. The Distance from *Ararat* to *Shinaar*, is  
 computed to be about 12 hundred Miles.† Now, I suppose, this Computa-  
 tion must be from the nearest Part of the Mountains, that was high Land,  
 and therefore it must be much further from the Eastern End of that long  
 Ridge of Mountains. It is expressly said, that *they travelled from the East to  
 Shinaar*, from which we must conclude that they came more Eastward than  
*Ararat*, since these Mountains lie North of *Shinaar*.‡ It must be wholly in-  
 congruous to their Circumstances, who were so few in Number, to travel so  
 many hundred Miles, before they made a Settlement, when there could cer-  
 tainly be no Necessity of it. What Reason could they have to induce them  
 to it? Certainly, not Want of Room to settle in, nor Want of Choice of  
 Ground; but there are plainly many Reasons against it, which we may easily  
 conceive; great Inconveniences must attend such an unsettled Condition, and  
 wise Men would not chuse to put themselves under Inconveniences, on purpose,  
 without the Motives of either Pleasure or Profit.

There are two Suppositions here, which may be made, either that in these  
 Journeys from the East to *Shinaar*, *Noah* and his Family got there in a little  
 Time; and so had settled there some considerable Time, before they under-  
 took

\* *Remarks on Languages*, p. 45.

† *Shuckf.* Vol. I. 104.

‡ *Shuckf.* *ibid.*



took the Building of *Babel*. Or, that they were a considerable Time in accomplishing this Migration; and so were but new Comers, when they undertook this Work.—As to the first Supposition, that they arrived soon, it is not at all probable, that they should journey with all their Necessaries, very far, before they made some Settlement; because they must soon have Occasion for Corn; and, where-ever they plowed, they must wait one Year for the Harvest; and, when a Field was brought into Culture, it would be surely easier for them to manage it to Advantage, for some Years, than to go every Year to new, rough Ground. If we allow ten Miles every Year for their advancing in this Journey, one Year with another, then they must be about 120 Years in reaching *Shinaar's* Plains; for 1 Year 10 Miles, is equal to 120 Years 1200 Miles. If therefore we proceed on the second Supposition, that they were a considerable Time in accomplishing this Migration, and so were but new Comers when they undertook the Building of their City and Tower. This is (I think) the Truth, as to the Builders of *Babel*, that they had not been long in that Settlement, before they undertook that Work; because they were dispersed, before they had finished their City.\* But we cannot imagine that all Mankind would be so long without Houses. *Noah* and his Sons had seen the Cities of the old World, for *Cain* certainly built a City, and, very likely, there were many more. And, as they were apprized of the Conveniency of Houses and Cities, they would doubtless have the like Conveniences, in the Land of their Settlement, sooner than they could be like to reach *Shinaar*, in any Congruity to their Circumstances. Wherefore the Company at *Shinaar* could not be *Noah* and his Sons, who undertook the City; but a Colony detached from them; who, soon after they settled in *Shinaar*, revived the Improvements which they had seen in the Mother Country. They would at *Shinaar* have the like Accommodations, as they had enjoyed before. But, then, they might proceed on some new Plans and Schemes; they would have a Tower, as well as a City, and they would in some View or other make themselves a Name. The learned Dr. *Shuckford* observes, Vol. I. p. 130. “Our Builders had travelled from their Ancestors “ many Hundred Miles, from *Ararat* to *Shinaar*.”

2. The Nature of this Project at *Babel* appears, by all the Accounts we have of it, to have been a bad Thing, because it was evidently displeasing to God. Now, if we suppose the great *Patriarch* himself to have been at *Shinaar*,† such an obstinate Act of Disobedience to God and to himself, could surely never be carried on, without his Animadversions and Reprehensions too; and this could scarce have been passed over in Silence, by the Historian.

*Noah*

\* *Perizonius* urges, (*Or. Babyl.* p. 188.) speaking of this City. *Hæc erat omnium prima, cuius condendæ, Homines Nomades et incertis antea Sedibus vagi, Consilium hoc tempore primum ceperunt.*

† *Vid. Buxtorf. Philolog. Theolog.* p. 70. and *Steph. Marinus. Exercitat. de Linguis*, cap. viii. p. 47.



*Noah* had been accustomed to Revelations, and very probably it was by divine Monition that the *general* Dispersion was ordered, as to the Time of it. Is it not strange, that there should be no Notice taken of him, in this last, and one of the greatest Transactions of his Life? Is it not strange that there should be no Notice taken of him, who was a Prophet, as well as Father and King of the whole Race, as to his Behaviour towards them, when they were carrying on a Design so *displeasing* to God, that he saw it worthy of a miraculous Defeat? That he should live to see all his Authority gone among his own Children; and the Spirit of God forsake him, which had so often supported his Authority in former Instances? The Consideration of the Wickedness, or Folly, of this Project, joined to that of *Noah's* Silence, amounts almost to a full Proof, that the *Patriarch* was not at *Shinaar*. This was what determined *J. Vossius*, among other Considerations of the like Kind, to embrace the *Chronology* of the *Septuagint*,\* and so to conclude that he was at that Time dead.

3. It could not be all Mankind, in the Days of *Peleg*, except *Noah* and a few more left with him, who journeyed from the East beyond *Ararat*, to the Plains of *Babylon*. No Reason can be given for their leaving *Noah*, or his forsaking them. But, if to serve the Hypothesis, that Mankind in general were there, and to account for the Silence, concerning *Noah*, in the Affair of *Babel*, some such Supposition must be made; yet still this Hypothesis is embarrassed with insuperable Difficulties. It is wholly unnatural to suppose that Mankind should have remained in a wandering, unsettled Condition, all the Time before the *Babel*-Building, and the Dispersion from thence; without Towns, Houses, Fields and Settlements. And, if they had any before, in the Countries from which they travelled to *Shinaar*, it is equally unnatural to suppose a Desertion of them, to wander thro' uncultivated Wilds, they knew not why or whither. No *American* Planters do any Thing of this Kind in our Days. And common Sense is the same in all Ages. We find, tho' the Continent of North *America* was before them, yet the first Settlement at *Plymouth* was never deserted after the Town was built. The new Planters, as they successively came from *England*, planted new Countries, and built new Towns, some in better Situations than *Plymouth*, as well as others in worse.—Again; *Nimrod* and his Associates built *Babylon*, *Nineveh* and other Cities, or Towns; but these Towns were never afterwards deserted, till they were destroyed and laid in Ruins by victorious Armies, many Ages from their Birth. On the contrary, they doubtless grew and enlarged, and flourished for many Generations. — Besides; we cannot reasonably imagine, that now, when they were dispersed, they should so soon set themselves to build Cities; if they had not done it before, when they were far more together, than any one Division could furnish, for many Years. The learned Writers, who suppose all Mankind to have

\* *Voss. Ætat. Mundi.* p. 17.

† *Dr. Mather's History of N. England.* Prince, Chron.



have come from the East to *Shinaar*, are constrained to suppose them to have lived a very unsettled Life, during all the Time, before their dwelling in *Shinaar*. The ingenious and learned *Perizonius* expressly asserts this, when he speaks of the Building of the Tower, to be as a Sign, or Land-Mark, to them, by which they were to direct their Return to the City, when they had gone far off, through that spacious Plain, with their Flocks. "The first Men lived after the Manner of *Nomades* and Shepherds; and hence they wandered in unsettled Seats, thro' the East, till they came to the Land of *Shinaar*." *Perizon. Origin. Babylon. 239. Hi primi Homines Nomades erant, Hinc incertis Sedibus vagati sunt, Namodum more, per Orientem, usque dum venissent in Terram Shinaar.* This great Man was led into this Opinion, of the general State of Mankind before the Dispersion, by the Account which *Moses* gives of the Lives of the *Hebrew Patriarchs*. But, as these were but a very small Part of Mankind, who had a particular State of Sojourning allotted to them; we cannot suppose *them* to be a Pattern, from which to judge of the State of the World in general. They, indeed, moved from Place to Place, with their Flocks, which was very agreeable to their Circumstances, as their chief Wealth did consist in Cattle. But then the Condition of Mankind, in general, was very different. *Noah* and his Sons might continue in this Manner of Life, for a few Years, till they found a convenient Country to sit down in; and might live in Tents, till it was more convenient to have Houses. But it could not be long. Their Riches could not consist only in Cattle; Corn and Fruits must be as necessary as Cattle; and therefore they must have Ground in Cultivation for growing all such Necessaries. And the *Mosaic* History supports this Account. For tho' the *Hebrew Patriarchs* lived in Tents, the *Natives* of *Chaldæa*, *Canaan*, *Egypt* and *Gerar*, who possessed the Country, lived in Houses, Towns, and Cities; and had their Corn Fields, Gardens, and Vineyards, and all their improved Lands in private Property. This is very clear from the History of *Abraham's* Purchase of his Burial Place, from *Ephron* the *Hittite*. *Gen. xxiii. 4. Abraham* petitioned the People of the Land for Leave to purchase a Possession of a Burial Place. He fixed on a Field belonging to *Ephron*, and upon this Application to *Ephron*, he made a generous Offer of presenting it to *Abraham*, in the Audience of his Fellow Citizens, even of all that went in at the *Gates of his City*, *ver. 10.* And, upon *Abraham's* modestly refusing the Gift, he paid the Price which was fixed by *Ephron*, and the Field, with the Cave and all the Trees in the Field round it's Borders, which I suppose were the Fence or Enclosure, were made sure to *Abraham*, *ver. 17.* There was *Pharaoh's House* or *Palace*, *Gen. xii. 15.* There were *Cities* in the rich Plains of *Sodom*, and probably all Places, which have Names given to them in the History of *Genesis*, were the improved Country, which had Towns built in them. As *Shechem*, *Hai*, *Bethel*, and the like. But, then, there were large Tracts fit for Pasturage, which on Account of the Thinness of Inhabitants, were not enclosed. And this



fully accounts for it, that the *Patriarchs* settled there, with their Flocks, Families and Servants, without giving any Offence or Umbrage to the native Inhabitants. We may conclude that they bought their Corn, Fruits, and other Necessaries from the Natives, who owned the improved Lands, with their Cattel, Wool, Skins, and the like. We meet with no Intimations of the *Patriarchs* sowing Corn, except in the Instance of *Isaac*. *Gen. xxvi 12. Then Isaac sowed in that Land, and received, in the same Year, an Hundred fold.* But then it is evident, from another Circumstance in the Story, that he lived in the City. For ver. 8. *And it came to pass, when he had been there a long Time—that Abimelech looked out at a Window, and saw Isaac sporting with Rebekah his Wife.* This Circumstance, in their Condition, is, I think, further confirmed, by their being so frequently constrained to remove upon any Famine, or Scarcity of Corn. They had no Property in Ground, and so could have little or no Corn of their own; and, when it was scarce, the Natives would not part with it to incommode themselves. Hence they always felt the first Inconveniences of a Dearth; and were obliged to betake themselves to more plentiful Countries, or those in which no Famine prevailed, for their necessary Supplies.

II. I come now to enquire into the *Nature* of their *Journeying* from the *East*, till they came to the *Plains of Shinaar*, where they *dwelt*.—If we understand this *journeying*, in this Sense, that they passed on, through a Variety of Country, in which they *did not* settle, till they came to *Shinaar*, in which they *did* settle. This is a proper Notion of journeying, but this further proves that it could not be all Mankind to whom this *journeying* was ascribed; for this would suppose the unnatural wandering Condition, of which I have shewn the Absurdity, under the last Head.—But, if we understand *journeying* in this Sense, their *gradual* moving forward from the *East*, *i. e.* of *Ararat*, where they were first in some Degree settled, by new Improvements, towards the *West*; and that they carried their new Plantations gradually on, as they had Occasion for them, till at last they came to the noble Plains of *Shinaar*, and dwelt there: This cannot be properly called a *journeying* of the whole Body, nor indeed of any but those who actually settled in those new found Plains. And yet all, who are said to *journey*, are said to *settle* after that journeying, and to dwell in the Plains of *Shinaar*. Now, if those, who fixed in the Plantations in the *East*, nearest *Ararat*, who are said to *journey*, are also said to *dwell in Shinaar*, which was 1200 Miles distant, this would doubtless be a great Inaccuracy at least, but it is an Inaccuracy, which there is no Occasion to allow, in the Words of *Moses*, who never says that all Mankind was at *Shinaar*.—I conclude, therefore, that the *journeying* could not mean this *gradual* moving forward, by new Improvements, till they reached *Shinaar*; nor could these *Journeymen* be said, in any consistent Sense, to *dwell in Shinaar*, if extended as above, to all Mankind; because, according to



to this Sense of journeying, some must be supposed to dwell still in the East, about, or beyond *Ararat*, and to be going forward, even far beyond it; since they could not, at that Time, be thought to have penetrated to the utmost East, the Borders of *China*, and the great South Sea. But this Description would very well agree to a *Part*, or one Division, of Mankind, and be very intelligible History, when thus applied: And therefore, we may suppose that those, who thus journeyed from the East, or *Mother Country*, were only one Division of Mankind, who, according to the Sovereign Direction of *Noah*, or by some Lot, or Agreement, moved Westward; while the other Tribes, or Divisions, went different Ways, according to such Direction, Lot, or Agreement.—In this View, as I observed, the whole History will be good Sense, for they journeyed, for some Time, and then settled, according to *Moses*, in a particular Country, different from that which they travelled from. Now there is no Absurdity in this, when supposed to be said of a Part of Mankind; for then they might still leave the Country, from which they came, properly inhabited; and new Countries, which other Tribes found, might be as properly supplied with Inhabitants, as *Shinaar*. This of *Journeying* is very proper Language to make use of, concerning one Division of Mankind. There is the Land, *from which* they journeyed, *the East*. The Land *to which* they came, *Shinaar*, and what then ensued, they *all*, who thus travelled, *dwelt* there? — Those who travelled from the East to *Shinaar*, and found those delicious Plains which tempted their Stay, were the very Persons who projected the City and Tower, and who were blasted by Providence in so extraordinary a Manner. Here they commenced their rebellious Design, contrary to the Instructions they had received, at their setting out. They knew the laudable End that was proposed, by the *general Dispersion*, *viz.* That the Earth might be more equally and speedily inhabited; and that one Part might not be a Garden, and the other a Desert, after there were Numbers sufficient for the Work of a more general Cultivation. They knew that, to answer this End, they were to separate themselves into smaller, distinct Societies, as soon as that could be conveniently done.—But, as they were now far enough from the Inspection of *Noah*, and could not be any longer apprehensive of his Animadversions, they proceeded on Plans and Schemes of their own. They were under new Governors and Leaders, and it is very probable that *Nimrod* might be among them; and being one of the elder Sort, and of a vigorous, enterprizing, and ambitious Temper, he might have a great Influence, which is agreeable to the Representation *Moses* gives of him.



## S E C T. VI.

*On the Confusion of Languages.*

WHEN this Part of the Sons of Men, this Division, which had travelled from the East, took up in the Plains of *Shinaar*, and dwelt there, their Project is related in *Gen. xi. 4.* *And they said, let us build us a City and a Tower, whose Top may reach to Heaven; and let us make us a Name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the Face of the whole Earth.* Commentators and Critics have fallen into great Diversity of Sentiments, as to the Reasons, which induced these Projectors to this Undertaking, which I take to be an obstinate Renouncing their original Orders, as to a further Separation.—It seems probable that there might have been many different Motives, which co-operated to fix them in this undutiful Resolution. The Deliciousness of the Country, the Fruitfulness of the Soil, the Temperateness of the Climate, the Conveniency of Water near a noble River; for these were the Plains of *Babylon*: All these joint Conveniences might conspire to determine them to stay there together.

Their Fears of a gloomy Solitude, in those comparatively small Companies, into which they were to subdivide themselves, might contribute to this Resolution of keeping together. They might imagine they could have little Comfort in Society.\* Their Apprehensions of wild Beasts and other noxious Animals, and the Danger they might be in, from them, might be a further Inducement to them, to decline a Separation. For, when they were but a few in each Plantation, they would be apparently in more Danger from those fierce Creatures, either when they were tilling the Ground, or were abroad with their Flocks and Herds. Here would be more copious Prey for the Savages of the Forest, which would naturally draw them nearer the new Plantations.†

The Frequency of these Dangers, very probably, made the Practice of Hunting so honourable in those early Ages, and perhaps Success in this first Sort of useful War made *Nimrod* so popular, as at last laid a Foundation for his Dominion over Men. *Gen. x. 9, 10.* *He was a mighty Hunter before the Lord.—And the Beginning of his Kingdom was Babel.* The remarkable Observation of *Seneca* in Praise of Social Life, is worth inserting here. “How is our Preservation secured, but by mutual Assistance? Place us but each alone, and what are we? The easy Prey of Beasts, who have each of them sufficient Powers for their own Defence. Every Thing, which is made to live a vague and solitary Life, is armed by Nature, but weak  
“ Man

\* *Perizon. Orig. Babyl. p. 245.* Metuisse eos horridam et tristem Solitudinem.

† *Bochart. Peleg. lib. iv. c. 12.*



“ Man is furnished with no Defence, no Guard of Talons, or Teeth, to  
 “ make him formidable to other Creatures; but naked and weak as he is,  
 “ Society is his Security.”\*—Slothfulness and Reluctancy to Labour, among  
 many of them, might incline them to settle in that Place, where they found  
 such large convenient Plains; and which would promise them more Ease in  
 tilling the Ground, than any Country they had passed thro’, in their whole  
 Journey from the East.—But further; after they had dwelt here, for some  
 Time, Ambition might inspire some of their Leaders with the Thoughts of  
 setting up a great Empire; this could not be an unnatural Thought, when  
 they were so great a Body of Mankind together; but this Reason of their  
 strengthening themselves there, supposes that there were at that Time other  
 Tribes elsewhere, against which they might level their ambitious Projects.  
 And when they knew that there were other great Divisions of Mankind gone  
 off, to plant various Colonies on each Side of them; this would naturally  
 induce these ambitious Men to endeavour to keep their Tribes together, to be  
 able to maintain themselves in such a Strength, that they might not only contend  
 with any Rivals for Power, but subdue them. There appears to have been  
 something of Ambition, either for Power, or Fame, or both, in their De-  
 sign. For they said, *Let us make us a Name*, which one would think must  
 mean a Project, either for a Monument of their Fame, or a Mean and Instru-  
 ment of their Power and Authority, and for their Defence as a Kind of For-  
 tress. *Perizonius*, indeed, has taken great Pains, in his whole Eleventh  
 Chapter of his *Origines Babylonicæ*, to support an Interpretation somewhat  
 singular. That this  $\square$  *Shem*, Let us make us a *Shem*, was a *Pharus*, or *Tower*  
*of Prospect*, which should be a Mean of directing the Shepherds, which were  
 gone far off with their Flocks; or any other Travellers, on any particular Ex-  
 peditions, to find a safe Return: And that it was to be very high, that so, in  
 that extended Plain, it might be conspicuous, at a great Distance. But this  
 Sense seems to be too mean and low, and Mr. *Le Clerc*’s Metropolis too *grand*  
 and high, for their Designs, at that Time, *viz.* that it should be the Metro-  
 polis of the whole World; tho’ (I think) that they might project it, for the  
 Capital of one great Empire, is not improbable.†

From all these Motives, and others not easily discoverable at this Time, the  
 Company at *Shinaar* renounced the original Design, according to the Instruc-  
 tions of *Noah*, of dispersing themselves for the more expeditious Cultivation  
 and Peopling the Earth; and, to strengthen themselves in their new Scheme,  
 they undertook the Building of the City and Tower.—When they were car-  
 rying on this great Design, the Lord confounded their Language. *Gen. xi. 7.*

And

\* *Seneca de Beneficiis*. iv. 18. Nam quo alio tuti sumus, &c.

† As to the Notion of a Temple, which some learned Men have supposed to have been their  
 Design, I do not see Reason to believe that Idolatry could have, at that Time, made such Ad-  
 vances, as to lead them to think of erecting either pompous Temples or Images. Those were  
 the Production of much later Ages.



*And the Lord said, let us go down, and there confound their Language, that they may not understand one another's Speech.* For Explication of the History of this Event, of the Confusion of Tongues, I would lay down the following Observations.

1. The Design, which they were upon, was displeasing to God. And tho' we may not be able at this Distance, and in this Scarcity of Materials, fully to determine in what their Crime particularly consisted; yet we must allow that there was something very criminal in their Design and Conduct. *Perizonius* allows that there was some Disobedience to the Order of God, imparted to them by *Noah*.\* And the main Part of their Crime did, probably, lie in this Disobedience to these Intimations of the divine Will, as to their further Separation; which, doubtless, was most conducive to the Order and Well-being of Mankind at that Time.

2. There was something extraordinary and miraculous, in this memorable Event. The whole History of it is drawn up in such a Strain, as to lead any Reader into this Apprehension of it. And one cannot think that so natural a Writer, as *Moses* generally is, should chuse such a Manner of Narration, as must mislead almost any Reader into a wrong Sense of a Matter of Fact. There is a Pomp and *Apparatus* in the Introduction of the Story, which cannot be well understood, otherwise than of something miraculous; speaking of the divine Acts, *More humano*. *And the Lord came down to see the City and the Tower, which the Children of Men builded.* Gen. xi. 5. which perhaps might be with some visible Grandeur of Appearance.† Then the heavenly Conference on the Occasion, *Now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do, ver. 6.* Then the solemn Resolution taken, of GOING DOWN, and there confounding their Language. Now this Event is related, to speak of God's acting, after the Manner of Men, in such Terms as are easy to understand supposing a Miracle, but otherwise it is almost unintelligible.

3. As to the Miracle, there is certainly no Difficulty in believing that there might be one wrought; especially if we may perceive the Occasion worthy of God, or the immediate Interposition of the divine Hand. I own, indeed, we are not always competent Judges of the Nature and Importance of Things, to determine *what is*, and *is not worthy of God*, or meet to require his extraordinary Operations.

We know not what great Ends were answered by this miraculous Proceeding, to be an Attestation to ancient Truths; we know not what Inconveniences, at that Time, might attend the *Homophonia* of the Men of *Shinaar*; and so cannot determine as to this Case. But it is always presumptuous to deny a Miracle, related by an Author, against whose Credibility we have no Exception, because such short-sighted Beings as we are cannot discern the Reason of it, or will imagine it unworthy of God. Many such weak and impious Cavils may be advanced against *Providence*, but they prove nothing but the Ignorance,

\* *Origin. Babyl.* p. 262.

† *Dr. Hunt's Essay*, p. 60.



Ignorance, or Wickedness, of their Authors. A Tyrant enslaves his Country, a Traitor sells it, a Persecutor succeeds in his hellish Schemes of oppressing Conscience, promoting Hypocrisy, and rendering Men either *wicked* in Hypocrisy, or miserable in Sincerity. Doth it therefore follow that there is no Providence? A Pestilence, or a Famine, lays a Land waste, like a destroying Army, or a Band of Robbers; yet dare we say this is unworthy of God, because we have not Compass of Knowledge to penetrate into some mysterious Steps, in the Ways of God? The dispossessing us of Life or Property as to either the Time or Manner, is doubtless within the unrivalled Prerogatives of God, and yet this is always exercised with Wisdom, tho' we cannot always comprehend it.

" When the loose Mountain trembles from on high,  
 " Shall Gravitation cease, if you go by?  
 " Or some old Temple nodding to its Fall,  
 " For *Chartre's* Head reserve the hanging Wall."

Again further,

" The Good must merit God's peculiar Care,  
 " But who but God can tell us, who they are.  
 " One thinks on *Calvin* God's own Spirit fell,  
 " Another deems him *Instrument of Hell*.  
 " If *Calvin* feels Heaven's Blessing, or his Rod,  
 " This cries there is, and that, there is no God."\*

4. The greatest Writers have, in general, understood this History of *Moses*, in this Sense; however different they have been in their Sense of particular Passages, or the Manner, or Extent, of this Confusion of Tongues.—Some have thought this heavenly Conference was with the holy Angels, that attended the Presence, and composed his Train, similar to the Counsellors and Guards of a great *Monarch*. A Notion of this Kind, as *Jamblichus* informs us, in his Book, *De Mysteriis*. Sect. v. Cap. 25. had prevailed among the *Chaldeans*. Before the Appearance of the Gods, march all those Powers, or Principalities, which are subject to them, and accompany them in their Descent to the Earth. Προ της παρουσίας των θεων προκινησιντας πασας δυνάμεις, ὡς αὐτοῖς ἀποτασσονται. And, tho' we need not subscribe to this *Chaldean* Figment of the various Gods, and their several distinct Equipage and Trains, yet there is no Inconsistency with sound *Theology*, to suppose there might be a Celestial Cohort of Angels, attending the *Shechinah*, which will authorize this Expression of *coming down*, and of conversing, or of their being some way acquainted with the Purposes of God, in this remarkable Transaction of his Will and Power. Others have thought

\* *Essay on Man*. Epist. iv. v. 120. &c.



thought that this sacred Conference was betwixt the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As Bp. *Patrick in Loc. Bochart*, and others. But this History is, I think, related, *More humano*, in Accommodation to our Conceptions, and especially to those of the first Readers of this History, who had not perhaps a distinct Notion of three divine Persons. It is to intimate to us, that God resolved to proceed with them in an extraordinary Way, to confound their Language, even as if there had been a Conference, or Consultation, upon it. Accordingly, Bp. *Walton* (in *Prolegom. Polyglot.*) alledges, “that the express Words of the Historian, imply a deliberate Purpose of God himself, to cause this Confusion, and also an actual Execution of it.”—\**Origen, Cyril, the Rabbins*, and others among the Ancients, alledge, that this great Revolution could not be brought about by any, but the great Creator himself, and not by Angels, good or bad; the Change surpassing their Power. This great Variety (says Bp. *Walton*) could not be introduced but by God alone, with whom to will, and to do, are the same. *Buxtorf the Younger* (in *Dissertat. Philologic. 2.*) observes, “That Philosophers and some others, unacquainted with History and Scripture, have attributed this Variety of Languages to Nature.”—Divines following the Authority of *Moses*, refer the Origin of the Multitude of Tongues to God. But, as to the Manner and Form of the Confusion, and how it was effected, they are divided in their Opinions. *Bochart* cites many Authorities, as *Cyril* and the other *Greek* and *Latin Fathers*, to support the Opinion of the Confusion being miraculous.† And the most learned Moderns generally fall into the same Sentiment. As *Duret, Heinsius, Selden, Momius, Huetius, Vitranga, Perizonius, Wootton.*‡

Now we cannot have the least Suspicion that this can be an Operation unworthy of God. For this divine Power has been often displayed, with Respect to the Language of Mankind; in such Instances as cannot be accounted for, any other Way, than by ascribing them to the Operation of God. The Gift of primitive Language, immediately imparted to our first Parents after their Creation, and enabling them to maintain Communion with each other.|| The Effusion of the Spirit on the Apostles, accompanied with the Gift of Tongues, whereby unlearned Men were enabled to speak in a great Variety of Languages, the wonderful Works of God's Love in Christ, to the different Nations with which they conversed (a). And then this extraordinary Change made in the Language of Mankind, at the *Babel-Confusion* (b).

The two first mentioned Instances were great Favours to the World, signally adapted to the promoting of Happiness, Knowledge and Order therein: And therefore cannot justly be said, by any Sort of Objectors, to be unworthy of God: And, as to the latter, tho' it occasioned much present Confusion,

\* *Shuckf. Connec.* Vol. I.

† *Phaleg. lib. 1. chap. 15.*

‡ *Vid. Dr. Chapman.*

|| *Dr. Hunt's Essay*, p. 62.

(a) *Benson's History of the first Planting the Christian Religion*, Vol. I. p. 58, &c.

(b) *Bochart. Phaleg. lib. 1. chap. 15.*



sion, yet, as it was an apt Mean to constrain the rebellious Tribes, at *Babel*, to separate themselves into less Subdivisions, for the more regular, uniform and orderly peopling of the Earth; it cannot be said to be unworthy of him, who rules the World, by a sovereign, tho' all-wise Providence.—God could have brought about this Event, so useful to the World, by many other Ways. But the sacred Historian informs us, that he chose this particular Method. And perhaps it was the most congruous and effectual to separate them into *proper* Companies; as of Relations and Kindred, who must be most conveniently, and even necessarily together. This might also be most astonishing and affecting to themselves, as a new miraculous Attestation of the Truth of their Faith in the Unity and Sovereignty of God, manifesting and displaying God's absolute Dominion over all their Faculties.

5. But several learned Men have attempted to account for this extraordinary Accident, the Confusion of Tongues, and the Separation of the Men of *Babel* upon it, in a common Way of natural Causes, without allowing any Miracle in it.

1. As to this we may observe, that the supposing it to be miraculous, is certainly most consonant to the Letter of the *Mosaic* History, as I noted above; and we should never depart from the literal and most obvious Sense of the Words of the Historian, except when an absolute Necessity constrains us to it. But further I reply that

2. The general, ordinary Causes of the Mutation of Language cannot sufficiently explain, or account for, this extraordinary Event; especially if it be understood to have been a pretty sudden, instantaneous Thing. Mr. *Le Clerc*, indeed, seems to question it's being instantaneous, for, says he, the History is so short, that the Transactions of many Years are crowded into a few Verses. And so, in this History, the Confusion might be coming on gradually, till at last they parted.\* But he proceeds on a Supposition, that it was an Unity and Agreement in Design, which is spoken of by *Moses*, which was broke by their Disagreement or Quarrelling among themselves, whereby they broke up at last, and left off to build the City. And as I think, I have proved that it could not, in a just grammatical Construction, be taken in that Sense, I shall not further pursue this Singularity of that learned Gentleman.—But, then, other great Writers endeavour to account for this Event, without a Miracle, from the Co-operation of the general Causes of this obvious Change in Languages, which are observed to work the same Effect thro' all Ages.† The general Causes of the Mutability and actual Change of Language are commonly reduced to these three. 1. The Difference of Climates. 2. Intercourse with Foreigners. 3. The unsettled Temper and Disposition of Mankind.

1. The Difference of Climates will insensibly cause a Variation in Language; because it will occasion a Difference in Pronunciation. There is a

\* *Clerc. in Loc.*

† *Vid. Badin. Method. Hist. cap. 9.*





Pronunciation peculiar to almost every Country in the World, and according to the Climate, the Language will abound with *Asperates*, or *Lenes*, *Guttural* Sounds or *Pectorals*, *Labials* or *Dentals*; a Circumstance which would make the very same Language sound very differently from itself, by a different Expression or Pronunciation of it.

2. A Commerce, or Intercourse, with foreign Nations, often causes an Alteration of Language. Two Nations, trading with each other, shall insensibly borrow Words from one another; and, if the Trade be of long Extent and Continuance, the Intermixture and Interchanging of Words and Phrases will daily encrease, so that both the Languages shall in an Age, or two, be greatly altered. Again, Plantations of new Colonies, Conquests, and the like, may have the same Consequences, as to the Alteration, or Corruption, of the original Language of any Nation.

3. The third Cause of the Mutability of Language is the unsettled Temper of Mankind. The very Minds and Manners of Men are continually changing; and, since they are so, it is not likely that their Idioms and Words should be fixed and stable. New Studies, new Arts, new Customs prevail, which must bring in new Words; as the *Romans*, who had a considerable Number of Words for all the common Uses of Life, yet were obliged, when they became more learned, to import a *Philosophical Language* from *Greece*; having no Words, in their own plain, vulgar Language, for those Ideas. Wherefore *Tully* remarks (in his *Treatise de Oratore*) *Usum loquendi Populo concessi, Scientiam mihi reservavi*.—There are Changes in Men's Humours and Fancies, which cannot be accounted for, as sometimes Men affect Abbreviations in the same Language, *Rep.* for Reputation. *Mob.* and many others, as *can't*, *shan't*, and the like.

4. And all these will operate more strongly to a Change, if there be no Writing or Spelling, to maintain a Sort of standard Purity, in the same Nation. The *Dialects* of our own Tongue, as they are spoke in *Cumberland*, *Yorkshire*, *Lancashire* or *Somersetshire*, would be soon unintelligible to each other, but for the Standard English, which is preserved by literal Correspondence; and particularly by one Bible made use of by them all. It is apparently true, that some or other of these general Causes of the Fluctuation of Language have kept it in a perpetual Variation, ever since the *Babel-Confusion*, but they could not take Place at that Time, to create, or occasion that Event.—They were all in one Climate in the Land of *Shinaar*, and lived near together, for they were building one City. So that whatever Change was made by the Climate, would affect all alike, by any natural Influence, or Operation upon their Organs.—Again; they being all settled in one Country, could have no Numbers of Strangers from other Colonies, to intermix with them, to import among them foreign Words and Idioms; for *all the Earth was of one Speech*. And this Part of *Moses's* History shews plainly that this Transaction at *Shinaar* could not be very long after the original, general



neral Dispersion, because the different Climates in which the different Colonies had settled, had not yet destroyed the Unity of the Language of the World.—And, as to the different, unsettled Humours of Men, they never could have a speedy Effect, to produce any considerable Change in Language, so as to render Men *unintelligible* to one another.—The learned Dr. *Shuckford*, not satisfied with any of these Accounts of the Confusion being brought about by the ordinary Causes of the Mutation of Language; attempts to account for it another Way, without a Miracle. \* “The Builders of *Babel* (says our learned Author) were evidently Projectors. And, if they had one Project, and an idle one, why not others? Language was but one, until they came to multiply the Tongues. But that *one* was without doubt scanty, fit only to express the early Thoughts of Mankind.—There had but passed 8 or 9 Generations to the Building of *Babel*, and all of them led in a plain, uncultivated Way of Living. But Men now begun to build Towers to open to themselves Views of a larger Fame.—And why may not the Thoughts of finding new Names for Things, which their enlarged Notions offered to their Consideration, have now risen?—Language was, without doubt, enlarged at some particular Time, and, if a great deal of it was attempted at once, a *Confusion* would naturally arise from it.” But this Account, however ingenious, will (I think) fall short of explaining two principal Points. *First*, The *Barbarity* of their common Language, and, *Secondly*, the main Thing in the *Mosaic* History of this Confusion, their becoming *unintelligible* to each other.

*First*, It seems plain, that, on our learned Author’s own Reasoning, Language must gradually enlarge and Words multiply, in the old World, as they discovered any new Inventions. The Improvements in Musick, Brass, and Iron, in about the sixth Age of the old World, must make an Addition to the *Copia* of their Words, as much as any Project of a Tower could do. And the finding new Names for the Things, which their enlarged Notions offered to their Consideration, must be a natural Thought. They would not, probably, have a Name, for an Ax, or Saw, or Knife, till they had found out those Instruments, and new Discoveries would create new Words all along, as the Discoveries were made, *before* as well as *after* the Flood. I can discern no Reason for supposing such an uncultivated Life, in the Days of *Noah*, who had been Witness to all the Improvements of the Antediluvians, and had certainly a great Compass of substantial Knowledge. And whatever Improvements were made, in the *Mother* Country, (from which the Men of *Shinaar* were withdrawn, according to the Sentiments of the learned Author himself) they would attempt to have at *Babel*; all that appears new, was this Tower; for *Cain* had built a City, many hundred Years before; and *Noah* had built a stupendous Fabric for Water-Carriage; neither of which Works could be executed, without a competent Variety of mechanic Instruments, and Skill in

\* *Connection*. Vol. I. p. 134.



the Use of them. And, methinks, their general Knowledge was at a greater Pitch, when they left *Noah*, than it was among the dispersed Tribes, for some Ages after. But *Secondly*, I think the principal Thing in this History of *Moses*, as to the Confusion, that they became *unintelligible* to each other, cannot be accounted for, in this Way. For, tho' they might affect to make use of a great many *new Words*, yet they could not thereby become *unintelligible*, unless they *lost*, or *forgot*, their old common Tongue; which could scarce be supposed to happen to Men, who lived always together, without a Miracle. They had (doubtless) old Names for Brick, Mortar, Timber, and all other Materials for Building, and for all the Tools, Instruments, and Engines which they made use of. So that, though they might affect to enrich their Language, with new and better sounding Names and Words, yet this could never constrain them to leave off their Work, on Account of their being mutually *unintelligible*. For, if they found Difficulties in carrying on their Work, thro' this Affectation of polishing their Tongue, they could still make use of their *old Words* and Names, which were synonymous to their affected *new* ones, rather than disband, and leave their favourite Project, on such a Pet and Punctilio. Upon the whole, I conclude, both from the Letter of the *Mosaic History*, and the Reason of Things, that this Confusion must have been miraculous.

Our next Enquiry must be, "in what this miraculous Event consisted, and "how it was brought about?" And this must doubtless be difficult to determine, out of so concise a History as *Moses* gives us of it.—Some have thought, that there were *many regular*, distinct Languages formed instantaneously, at *that Time*, which continued to distinguish the several Colonies, afterwards, according to their Tongues in their Nations.\* The Masters in the *Rabbinical Schools*, and the ancient *Christian Fathers*, both *Greek* and *Latin*, do in the general embrace this Opinion. In this Sentiment they are followed by many learned Moderns, who suppose that the different original Languages of the Earth were instantly imparted by a divine Power, to so many Families, as should be necessary, for the proper Dispersion of Mankind, for the laying a Foundation for different Nations. This Opinion has, however, been rejected by several celebrated *Critics*, as the *Casaubons*, Father and Son, *Heidegger. Histor. Patriarcharum*, and *Aben Ezra*, among the *Rabbins*, as *Perizonius* informs us.† But, as I have not had Opportunity of perusing these Authors on this Subject, I cannot lay down the Reasons they assign for their Opinions. But I shall state the Argument, which appears to me to be pretty clear and decisive. The Occasion of working this Miracle, was an Act of Obstinacy and Rebellion against God, which was certainly displeasing to him. God wrought a miraculous Confusion of their Language among them; whereby they were disconcerted in the Prosecution of their own Schemes, and constrained to separate and disband. But, can we imagine that the Design of this

\* See Dr. Hunt's *Essay*, p. 56.

† *Origen. Babylon. p. 272.*



this Miracle was to accommodate them *better*, and that they should be such great *Gainers* for being obstinate and perverse? It would seem that it would have been too distinguishing a *Favour*, and too grand a Privilege to bestow on these rebellious Multitudes, to inspire them miraculously with so many *regular* Languages. This was more than was done to the *Apostles* themselves, as the Numbers sharing in it must be greater. Their Conduct was criminal, and when any Crimes are miraculously animadverted upon, it is in Way of Punishment. But this could not (had this been the Case) have been properly called a *Confusion* of Tongues, but an orderly, miraculous *Inspiration* of new ones. Methinks the Opinion of the learned *Belgick Professor, Perizonius*, is more probable; for he accounts for it, in a Way which answered the End of Providence, in dispersing them; and yet carried in it the Marks of divine Displeasure on Account of their Obstinacy. — “It was not, says the *learned Professor*, an instantaneous Production of many new Languages, but a proper Confusion of Speech, which Way soever it was effected. *Confusio Labii nequaquam fuit Subita complurium novarum Linguarum Productio, cum Veteris Oblivione, sed vera et propria Sermonis Confusio, quâcunque tandem ratione illa extiterit.*”\*

They might, for that Time, have such a Disorder in the Organs of Speech, as to produce great Stammering and Hesitation, and be affected with such a diseased and various Pronunciation, as to interrupt their Correspondence very considerably. They might perceive, in this unusual Alteration in themselves, the Tokens of God's Displeasure, which might throw them into great Perplexities of Mind, so as to forget what they were going to say, or even forget many of their old Words, and drive them to use any new ones, which first occurred. The Historian says that God WENT DOWN to confound their Language, so that there might be a visible, glorious Appearance, accompanying the *Shechinah*, which might not only operate on their Organs, but create an Astonishment and Horror of Mind, which might urge and hasten their Separation. And, if they parted in such Perturbation, and Confusion of Spirit, they must go off without much Concert, in Companies of the nearest Relations and Kindred, who were tied together by Nature; and must abide the Inconveniences of the Confusion; and learn to understand each other as soon and as well as they could. But as the same learned Person observes,† “This Confusion was not a permanent Impression on them, but only while it was necessary to procure their Separation. *Non fuit hæc labii Confusio perpetua, sed ad tempus a Deo adhibita tantum, ut Homines ad Secedendum cogeret.*” And it is natural to conceive, that they might in a great measure return to their ancient Language, after their Separation, and the End of the Miracle was answered. For if the Perturbation and Perplexity of Mind, which they were in, under a Sense of God's Displeasure, and perhaps under the

\* *Perizon. Orig. Babylon. p. 274.*

† *Perizon. ibid. p. 275.*



the visible, awful Apparitions attending the *Shechinah*, and hovering over *Babel*; if this I say went off, when they were driven from the Work, they might then come to themselves again, and in good measure remember their ancient Tongue. But however their Pronunciation might for ever remain under some Disease and Infection, after this Shock. There might be some new Inflections of Words, and doubling of Syllables in a stammering Speech. There might be some new Terminations to the same radical Words, prolonged in Confusion and Fright, which their Children might hear as original Words, whereby an *Hebrew* radical Word might attract the Air of a *Greek* one, by this Variety of Terminations.—AGAIN; a Taste of new Words, which might perhaps be begun before the Confusion, might, when their Perplexity and Fright was over, be revived in every Family, or little Colony, which would gradually make further Alterations in the original Language. But there was such a manifest Kindred among the different Languages of the Earth, for many Ages after the *Babel*-Confusion, that one can scarce suppose that the primitive Tongue was lost. We find *Abraham* a Native of *Chaldæa*, (who had been brought up with *Terah*, who had probably conversed with the ancient *Patriarchs*) when he removed from *Chaldæa*, towards *Canaan*, travelled up and down, and conversed with all the Tribes of the *Canaanites*, *Egyptians* and *Phœnicians*, without any Inconveniency arising from Diversity of Language, that is ever taken Notice of, by *Moses*. So that, in all Probability, the Languages of these several Countries were not very different; but nearly the same which *Ham* and *Shem*, and *Noah* spoke, till the Time of the Dispersion; and which was not greatly altered, after the Confusion had so far prevailed, as to cause the Separation.—How this Uniformity of Language afterwards changed into different national Tongues, by Length of Time, may be accounted for, from the general Causes of the Mutability of Language, mentioned already; of which we find plentiful Examples in all Ages since; and of which we have demonstrative Proofs by Experience, even in the Languages of the same Country, as in *Spain*, *Italy*, *France* and *Britain*. Tho' in these, only some of the Causes can operate; for the different Influence of the Climate on the Organs of Speech, can have no Efficacy to a Change, on those who live in the same Climate.—I have now set down the Opinions of the best Critics I have had Opportunity of consulting; and have given that Account of this wonderful Transaction, which, on the whole, appears to me the most consistent with the Letter of the Historian, and the Reason of Things. I think so natural an Historian as *Moses* would not have given so pompous an Account of God's coming down, as with a celestial Train, to execute this Judgment, unless he had intended to relate a Miracle. I think there is no Reason to except to the Report of a Miracle, by so credible an Historian, uncontradicted by any other, tho' we cannot penetrate into the Reasons and Connections of Things so far as to pronounce peremptorily, on their being worthy or unworthy of God. It might be a good Rule for the  
Fictions



Fictions of Poets. *Nec Deus interfit nisi dignus Vindice Nodus.* But it has no Business in *History*, where Truth is the Object.—It further appears to me that this Miracle was inflicted as a Mark of divine Displeasure; and therefore was not a miraculous *Imparting* of an inspired regular Language to those rebellious Multitudes; but a Confusion of their Language, which *distressed* them, perhaps astonished them, made them uneasy enough for a Time, and answered it's End, of procuring their Separation into proper Subdivisions.—I add, finally, one Observation more, *viz.* That the Truth of the *Mosaic* History is so far from being contradicted by any genuine Records, that it is most nobly and authentically confirmed by the City and Country retaining the Name of *Babel*, through all Generations. *Nimrod* would never have given so *ominous* and reproachful a Name to his Capital; but that some such notorious and undeniable Circumstance as this, obliged him to it, at that Time; and hereby it became the perpetual Memorial of this great and humbling Transaction. Every Age and Nation called this great City, the supposed Seat of the first Empire, even according to Heathen Writers, *Babel*, or *Confusion*. What a signal Defeat was here given, by Providence, to their ambitious Plan, *Let us make us a Name?* For what they aimed to erect, as a Monument of their *Grandeur* and *Glory*, God indeed suffered to stand long, but then it was as a Monument of their own *Infamy* and *Folly*, the Impotency of their Rebellion, and their decisive Defeat.—*Moses* informs us of the Occasion of it's having this most *infaustum Nomen*, *this un auspicious and infamous Name*, entailed upon it; which (no doubt) those who first named it were fully conscious of. Hereby these Projectors for Fame, or Empire, did indeed make themselves *a Name*. But how much the Reverse of their own Design? Their Defeat was, as it were, inscribed on this monumental Tower, in the Name they gave it; a Memorial, which lasts when the Tower is destroyed; when all it's ancient or modern Magnificence, described by *Herodotus*, or enjoyed by *Philip's* Son, lies buried in ignominious Ruins, and blotted out, even from the curious Traveller's Eye, so that they enquire almost in vain, where *Babel* stood. There are several Testimonies from *Heathen* Writers, which bear witness to this ancient Tradition, that all Mankind were united once in the Use of the same Language; and they commonly relate it in Conjunction with some other Fictions about this Tower, or something similar to it. Thus *Abydenus* has expressed himself, in a Fragment of his *Assyrian* History, preserved by *Eusebius*: “There are some, who relate that the first of Mankind  
“rising out of the Earth, and elated exceedingly with their Strength and  
“Size, and thinking to make themselves superior, even to the Gods them-  
“selves, raised an enormous Tower, and that they had almost got to Hea-  
“ven, when the Winds coming to the Assistance of the Gods, overturned  
“their Structure. And that having continued, till that Time, of one and  
“the same Language, they were thenceforward divided by the Gods into  
“many.”\*

Eupolemus,

\* *Præparat. Evang.* L. 9. c. 14.



*Eupalemus*, as cited by the same learned Father from *Polybistor*, in his Discourse concerning the *Jews*, (*Præp. Evang.* l. ix. c. 17.) says, "That *Babylon* was first built by those that were saved from the Deluge. That they were Giants, and the Persons, who created the Tower, so much celebrated in History; but that, upon it's being overthrown, by the immediate Act of God, the Giants were dispersed over the whole Earth."\* I am inclined indeed to think that these *Pagan* Testimonies were of such Authors as had seen the Works of *Moses*, or had heard of them, during the Captivity of *Babylon*. But I cite them chiefly to shew, that these *Chaldean* Antiquaries did not apprehend any Absurdities in these *Hebrew* Stories, tho' there might not, perhaps, be any similar *Pagan* Traditions. However I suspect that genuine, unassisted, *Pagan* Tradition had really failed them, as to many original Truths of Fact, both as to the Origin of Mankind, and this miraculous Dispersion.—*Diodorus Siculus* (*Bibl.* l. i.) accounts for the Diversity of the Languages of the World, in a very different Manner, according to the Notions he had of the Original of Mankind. "All Mankind sprung up, in the Beginning, from new soft Earth, in different Parts, by the Energy of the Sun's prolific Heat; for which Reason the first Societies of Men had *ἕκ ὁμοφρονου τῶν διαλέκτων*. A very different Dialect, or Language."†—I have no more to add, upon this History of the Confusion of Tongues, or of my Notion of it, that it was the finishing of the general Dispersion, begun before, by the Direction of *Noah*, in the Mother Country; but now compleatly executed, by means of the Confusion, among the Men of *Shinaar*. For, according to this Interpretation, the Lord did scatter them from thence, who mutinied and rebelled against the general Order for a Dispersion: And by their being separated at last, the whole was accomplished; and so a finishing Hand was put to this grand Design of Providence.—And again; it is consistent to say, that God did there confound the Language of all the Earth. For all the Earth was of one Language before; but all the Earth was never entirely of one Language after. For, tho' only those at *Babel* were miraculously confounded; yet they and all the rest of Mankind were under the perpetual Influence of the general Causes of the Mutation; which would be changing their Language to the End of the World. So that all that *Moses* asserts will be strictly true.—This simple and plain Account of these memorable Events, is so agreeable to the Letter of *Moses*; and so congruous to all the Circumstances, which Mankind could (probably) at that Time, be in; that we are not constrained to make any strange, unnatural Suppositions, or Conjectures, for the Solution of Difficulties, which the greatest Men, in other Schemes, are forced upon.

C H A P.

\*Vid. Bochart. *Phaleg.* lib. i. c. 15.†Vid. *Perizon.* O. B. p. 272.



## C H A P. VII.

*On the Time of the general Dispersion.*

**W**E are expressly told by *Moses*, when this general Dispersion was effected. It was in the Days of *Peleg*, who was born in the 101st Year after the Flood, and died in the 340th; so that this great Alteration was brought about, in some Part of this intermediate Space, betwixt the 101st and 340th Year of the *Æra* of the Deluge. Many learned Men have referred this celebrated Event to the Year of *Peleg's* Birth. But, as I do not perceive a sufficient Ground for this Opinion, in the *Mosaic* History, I shall, with due Respect to those great Names who have espoused it, offer my Reasons for differing from them.

## S E C T. I.

*Peleg's Name doth not prove that the Division was at the Time of his Birth.*

1. **M**OSSES certainly doth not say so, that this general Division was about the Time of *Peleg's* Birth.\* That, which has induced so many eminent Writers to fall into this Opinion, is this, that *Moses* gives this Reason for *Heber's* calling his Son, by this Name; because, in his Days, the Earth was divided. But this Name might be given him, either at his Birth, or afterwards, when the Event happened: For it certainly did not happen before, since it was in his Days that the Earth was divided.—If this Name was not given at his Birth, then it might be many Years after it, and so doth not point to any determinate Part of *Peleg's* Days.

2. But, if it be all owned, that *Heber* gave this Name to his First-born Son, at his Birth, with Reference to this Event; yet there may be good Reasons assigned for this Conduct, without supposing the Division to be made at that Time. It may be pretty rationally accounted for, either from natural Foresight, or the Spirit of Prophecy. Natural Foresight may go a great Way to account for it. Mankind was then multiplying fast. *Noah* and his Sons knew that the Earth was to be peopled, by their Descendants. They knew how populous the old World was. And that the *Postdiluvian* Earth was as fruitful as the *Antediluvian*, for maintaining Multitudes, as soon as they were

\* *Usser. Chronol. Sacr. cap. v. Scriptura non in Ortū, sed in Diebus Phalegi divisam Terram fuisse dicit.*



ready to cultivate it. They might not, in the first Century, experience any Decays, to intimate any Fears of a less Longevity than their Ancestors had enjoyed. This would make it natural for them to be thinking of a Dispersion in due Season.—This might be a frequent Subject of *Conversation* among the *Patriarchs*, *Noah* and his Sons; and also a very proper one for their *Meditations* alone, how most comfortably to settle the spacious World before them. This being much in *Heber's* Thoughts, he might, very rationally, give his Son this Name, from an Apprehension that such an Event might happen in the Days of his First-born. And, in this common View, there would seem to be no Necessity for the Spirit of Prophecy, to inform him of an Event approaching, which common Reason would apprize him of. But (*Secondly*,) If natural Foresight be not sufficient to account for this Proceeding of *Heber*, yet he might give his Son this Name by the Spirit of Prophecy.\* And, indeed, I think there might be some prophetic Monition in it. For it is commonly understood of a *general* Division; and, in this View, it may be questioned, whether their own Sagacity would have led them to think of a *general* Dispersion, all, about *one Time*, without *Revelation*. And, if they could not be apprized of the proper Time and Circumstances of the approaching Division, without *Revelation*; it may be thought altogether worthy of God, to put them in mind of this great Separation that was to be made; and to intimate Directions both as to the Time and Manner of it. There were some certain Instances of giving Names to Children by Prophecy, as *Gen. v. 29*.

3. This prophetic Monition might be of singular Advantage to them all. It might excite the *Patriarchs* to a greater Industry and Vigilance in instilling the most substantial Principles, and inculcating the best Rules of Action. It might excite the younger Tribes to greater Application for their own Improvement, in all Sciences and Arts, as well as *Religion*; having Intelligence of such an approaching Dispersion, by the Spirit of Prophecy. It would be apt to rouse every thinking Person, among them, to labour to lay up a greater Stock of useful Knowledge, to be subservient to their Well-being in every separate Colony; when they could no longer have recourse to the Wisdom and Experience of the *Patriarchs*, to extricate them, in any Difficulties that might occur. And, finally, being thus apprized of the approaching Separation would naturally dispose them to a more chearful Compliance with the prudent Regulations of the great *Patriarch* and his Sons, for the methodical conducting this momentous Revolution; it would be apt to stir them up, both in dutiful preparing for it, and in executing it, as soon as it could be undertaken with Discretion.—These Considerations remove all the Difficulties which might seem to embarrass the *Mosaic* Account, of this memorable Revolution;

\* *Usher. Chron. Sacr. cap. v. Heberum Vaticinio quodam Filio suo Phaleg nomen hic imposuisse plurimi affirmant.*



volution; and this prophetic Memorial of it's Approach in *Peleg's* Name. We are not constrained, by any Thing which *Moses* asserts, to suppose, that the Division was accomplished, at the Time of *Peleg's* Birth, since his having that Name given him before the Event, may be very rationally accounted for, in other Ways.

## S E C T. II.

*There could not be competent Numbers of People in the World, for the Dispersion at Peleg's Birth.*

**T**H E general Division, or Separation of Mankind, could not be so soon as at the Birth of *Peleg*, in the Year after the Deluge 101, because the Numbers must then have been so small, as to render it highly inconvenient, to separate, to any considerable Distance from each other. It is probable that *Noah* had no Children after the Flood; because, after mentioning the Posterity of his former Sons, *Shem*, *Ham* and *Japhet*, it is added, *Gen. x. 32. These are the Families of the Sons of Noah, and by these were the Nations divided in the Earth, after the Flood.* So that there were but three Pair to be the Fountains of Propagation, and the lineal Ancestors of the whole human Race; therefore from these three Pair only, must the whole World of Mankind proceed in a natural Series of Descent.

1. Now we have no Reason to imagine, from any Hints in the History of *Moses*, that there was any Thing extraordinary in the Multiplication of Mankind. They probably married at those Years, which were then their early Youth. Thirty-five Years of *Arphaxad's* Age were as young, in Proportion to his Age of 500 Years, as perhaps 18 are in our Life, which is ordinarily in old Age at 80. And the Women might be liable to few Abortions, in those healthy and vigorous Ages. But we may suppose that the Encrease was in such a natural Order, after they were adult, as has ordinarily prevailed ever since; allowing for their different Longevity, on account of which, they would have Children much longer.

2. If this was so, then the Order of regular Encrease may be computed, from the second Year after the Flood, when *Arphaxad* was born, in an orderly Series at the Interval of every two Years betwixt the Birth of every Child. — This Interval must be reasonable to admit, since there could be no hired Nurses; but every Mother must nurse her own successive Children on the Breast, till they were fit to be weaned. — Proceeding on this reasonable Supposition of allowing two Years Interval at a Medium, betwixt the Birth of each Child. Then *Shem* might have had fifty Children in the 100th Year of the



*Ara* of the Deluge. And, according to the same Encrease, he might have had 120 Children in 240 Years from the Flood. Thus,

1st Son born.	A. Dil.	2
2d	-	4
10th	-	20
20th	-	40
40th	-	80
50th	-	100

*Arphaxad*, allowing 30 Years for the Medium of their Puberty, might have in like Succession, as follow :

1st Born.	A. Diluv.	32
2d	-	34
3d	-	36
4th	-	38
5th	-	40
10th	-	50
20th	-	70
30th	-	90
35th	-	100

Pursuing the same Calculation, through all the three Lines, it will appear that with the eight Persons which came out of the Ark, there could be no more than about 3000 Persons in the World, in the Year of *Peleg's* Birth, which was the 101st Year after the Flood. And as many of these were Women and Children, there could not be a Number of Families to furnish convenient Colonies, to separate to any great Distance, this Year.

3. The placing the general Dispersion, at this Time, is attended with so many and great Inconveniences and Difficulties, as to render it highly improbable, that it should have been then executed. It is supposing a Series of Events to have happened in the most unnatural Manner imaginable ; whereas it is the peculiar Glory of the *Mosaic* History, that it is extremely natural, quite through. There are no *Anachronisms* in Nature, where the Facts are inconsistent with the Age of the World, when they are said to be done ; or with the *Geography*, or *Climates*, where the Scenes of Action are laid ; nor any Incongruity, as to the Characters of the Actors, with the Actions ascribed to them.—But, if wise Men are represented as acting by their own *Choice*, in a very indiscreet unnatural Manner, we are tempted to hesitate in our Assent to the Narration.—Who can suppose that they should leave the venerable *Patriarch* by himself, in a Condition too weak to catch a Sheep, or till the Ground, for Corn and other necessary Fruits? Who can suppose that, when the



the World had so few Persons in it, they should disperse themselves over the Face of the Earth, and wander up and down in little separate Bands; a few Families in *Shinar*, a few in *Elam*, a few in *Canaan*, a few in *Egypt* or *Arabia*, and a few in *Greece* and *Thrace*? Can we suppose a few Men with their Wives and helpless Children, without Servants or Friends; without House or Home; wandering among wild Beasts and Desarts; flying from each other, into lonely, comfortless and uncultivated Solitudes; parted by Mountains, Rivers, and even Seas? As if inspired with general mutual Disgust, and an unsociable Jealousy and Enmity, when they were all the Children of the same Family? To suppose them to *choose* all these Inconveniences, *voluntarily* to combat all these Difficulties, and to take so much *Pains* to make the World as uncomfortable as they could to themselves, is highly unnatural and improbable.—A View of these Difficulties, attending the Dispersion at the Time of *Peleg's* Birth; which was in the Year 101, after the Deluge, (according to the *Hebrew Chronology*) has been manifestly the chief Reason, which has induced several learned Men to embrace the *Chronology* of the *Greek* Version, commonly called the *Septuagint*. The View of the same Inconveniences in the Interpretation of the Division in 101, has put other great Men upon making unnatural Calculations of the Encrease of Mankind, in order to have Numbers sufficient for the Dispersion in 101 Years after the Flood. But as I have noted already, *Moses* doth not say that the Division was at *Peleg's* Birth, but in *Peleg's* Days; a Manner of Expression that seems plainly to intimate that it *was not* at his Birth. And I have accounted for his having this Name, even with reference to that Event, tho' yet future, on very intelligible Principles, and easy Suppositions, consistent with every Thing that *Moses* says upon this Subject. So that we may readily acquiesce in all that *Moses* relates, that the Earth was divided in *Peleg's* Days; and that *Peleg* was named with a particular Regard to that Event; and yet all Difficulty and Embarrassment, as to the Time of the Dispersion, may be avoided.

## S E C T. III.

*On the plain Characters of Time, set down by Moses, for determining the Dispersion.*

**T**H E R E are some pretty clear Characters of Time, expressly set down by *Moses*, that help us to determine about what Time the Dispersion took place; and satisfactorily decide this celebrated Controversy; which has been fruitful of many Incongruities, for want of considering both History and Nature. *First*, The Dispersion was in *Peleg's* Days.—*Secondly*, It was after *Joktan's* 13 Sons were all of them Heads of Tribes.—*Thirdly*, It was finished



finished before the Birth of *Haran*.—As to the *first* great Character of Time, *Peleg's Days*, I shall add no more to what I have already observed on that Head, but only this, That it is most probable that this general Dispersion took Place nearer the latter End of his Life, than the Beginning, both because the Numbers of Mankind would not congruously admit it more early. And that it was fit that there should be Men of Years, Experience and Authority, at the Head of every Tribe, to lead them out with most Advantage; such as *Peleg* and his Contemporaries. Secondly, The Dispersion was brought about after *Joktan's* thirteen Sons were all of them Heads of Tribes. This plainly appears from this, that all the thirteen by Name, were settled in a particular Region, which is expressly specified by *Moses*. *Gen. x. 30. And their Dwelling is from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar, a Mount of the East.*—(1.) It is very obvious, from this *Historical* and *Geographical* Account, that all these thirteen Sons of *Joktan* actually removed to, and settled in, a particular Habitation and Country of their own. For their Dwelling, or Settlement, or Habitation was in that particular Country, or Region.—The Way of speaking concerning them, is very different from that made use of, concerning the Sons of *Japhet* and *Ham*, *Gen. x. 5.* By these, *viz.* Sons of *Japhet*, were the Isles of the *Gentiles* divided in their Lands, every one after his Tongue, after their Families, in their Nations. And the same Phraseology is made use of, as to the Divisions of the Sons of *Ham*, *Gen. x. 20.* But now, can this be supposed to be a Description of the personal Journeying of *Gomer*, and the other Patriarchs, into these remote Lands, at the Time of the Dispersion? Can it be supposed that *Gomer* and *Javan*, or their Sons, *Askenaz* and *Elisha*, had, each of them, different Tongues at that Time? This is not natural to suppose, if they were dispersed from the East, in the general Division; and, if they were among the Numbers that were scattered from *Shinaar*, these Fathers of Tribes could hardly have reached so far as *Greece* in that Age.—I apprehend, therefore, that this is an Account of the Posterity of some of the principal Sons of *Japhet*, whose Descendants planted those remote Countries, some Ages after. But they might name their Countries, or their Tribes and Nations, after the Names of their great Ancestors, whom they had left with *Noah*, in the *Mother Country* or original Plantation.—No doubt but *Japhet* and *Ham*, as well as *Shem*, had many other Sons, besides those which are named by *Moses*; otherwise the World could not have been tolerably inhabited in a Thousand Years. But there were doubtless very good Reasons for mentioning these Ancestors of Nations, rather than others; tho' those Reasons cannot be, with any Certainty, assigned at this Time. And yet, if these, here mentioned by *Moses*, were the very Planters themselves, it may be made a consistent Account. For, if they were the same Sons of *Japhet* and *Ham*, who were born in the same Year of the World with *Peleg*, and *Nimrod*, they might be set down here, as they were actually Leaders of these Colonies, which at last settled in these Parts; when



when there might have sprung up a Variety of Tongues. The Names of the eldest Sons, who staid at home with *Noah*, might, for Reasons inscrutable by us, at this Time, be omitted. We have no Account of the Age of any of them certainly, but *Arphaxad* and his Line, to *Terah*; and perhaps of *Canaan*, who probably was born at the Time of *Noah's* Fall. But there is nothing said of the thirteen Sons of *Joktan*, but what looks like personal History. Their *Abode*, their *Dwelling*, or *Place of Settlement* was in that very Country, of which *Moses* gives a short *Geographical* Description.—We have another *Geographical* Description, of the Settlement of the *Canaanites*, *Gen. x. 18.* but it is laid down in a Manner of Expression, which intimates a Difference in the two Accounts. *Afterwards* were the Families of the *Canaanites* spread abroad from *Sidon* to *Gaza*. It was *afterwards*, that the Border of the *Canaanites* was fixed; but these thirteen Sons of *Joktan* had their Dwelling in *Mesha* at the Dispersion. I think, therefore, that it must be admitted, that this is a personal History of these 13 Heads of Tribes. They all settled, *they all* had their fixed Dwelling, in the Neighbourhood of this Eastern Mountain, in a Country of their own. (2.) But, as there is no mention of the Time of their Lives, when they settled their Colony, this must be determined, as far as it is capable of it, by Probability of Circumstances. *Heber* had only two Sons mentioned by the sacred Historian; *Peleg*, in whose Days the Earth was divided; and *Joktan*. As *Peleg* is mentioned first, and there doth not appear any particular Reason for that Preference, we may allow that it was on account of Primogeniture. But there certainly could be no great Difference, if *Peleg* was not elder, since *Heber* was but 34 at the Birth of *Peleg*, which was early Youth in those Ages of Longevity. If *Peleg* was the first born, then *Joktan*, in the Course of Nature, could not be born before the Year 103, after the Flood. And he, then, might have a Son in the 133d Year, and a Grandson in the 163d Year after that memorable *Epocha*, according to the mean Age of their Puberty.\* But then it must be considered, that all these 13 Sons are mentioned as Heads of Colonies, one as much as another. And then it must be a great while longer before the thirteenth could be old enough to be a Head of a Family; a will appear by the following Table of Descent.

1st Son

\* *Archbp. Usher. Chronol. Sac.* cap. v. urges the Case of *Joktan's* Sons, and calculateth, that, tho' *Joktan* might be born, when *Heber* was 17, and he have the first of these 13, at 17 Years of his own Age, yet these 13 could not be Leaders of Colonies in 101, as many suppose them to have been.



1st Son born A. Diluv.	133	Grandson A.D.	163
2d	135		165
3d	137		167
4th	139		169
5th	141		171
6th	143		173
7th	145		175
8th	147		177
9th	149		179
10th	151		181
11th	153		183
12th	155		185
13th	157		187

By this Table it plainly appears that the 13th Son of *Joktan* could not have any Child, according to the Course of Puberty in that Age, before the Year 187 of the *Æra* of the Deluge, at the very soonest. And, if he had not a Family at the Dispersion, then he would not probably have been mentioned, as the Head of a Tribe, or Family, at going out; but would have been like to have been swallowed up in some elder Tribe. But, as he is as distinctly mentioned as any of them, as the Head of a Tribe, we may suppose that he *was so*, and that they all had Families when they begun their Migration, or made their Settlement.\* And as there could be few mercenary Servants to be had, and they were removing into an uncultivated World; it is reasonable to suppose that the 13th Son, who was the Head of a Tribe like the rest, had several Children grown up to be an Assistance to him, in his necessary rural Affairs, and to carry on the Business of his little Settlement, or confederate Colony, perhaps under the Sovereignty of their Father *Joktan*. Suppose then the 13th Son had a Child of 30 Years of Age, this will bring us to the 217th Year after the Deluge. This is the soonest that he could go out, as the Head of a Tribe, with any tolerable useful Family. But I think it is not probable that it could be near so soon. For, in the first place, we cannot be certain that *Joktan* was the next in Birth to *Peleg*, of *Heber's* Children. There might be several Sons, or Daughters, betwixt these two Brothers, which might put off the Adulthood of *Joktan* several Years, as to Year 135, 137, 139, 141; and then all his Posterity must be brought answerably lower down in the Line of Time, as to 165 or 171. A. Diluv.

Again;

\* *Perizon. Or. Babylon.* p. 298. argues from this Fact, that the Settlement of these 13 Sons of *Joktan*, must refer to a Time, long after *Peleg's* Birth; so that this Difficulty has been perceived by many learned Men.



Again; we cannot be certain, nor is it probable, that all the 13 Sons of *Joktan* were born in immediate Succession, one after another; so that we must not only allow 26 Years to the Birth of the youngest, but 26 Years also for the Birth of their 13 Wives, at two Years Interval, betwixt the Birth of each of them. Then their Descent will stand thus,

1st Son of <i>Joktan</i> born A. Diluv.	-	143
Last Child would be born	-	195
1st Grandson born	-	171
Last Grandchild born	-	221

Again; there might be some Sons of *Joktan*, not so enterprising, and so fit for Government, who might incorporate in some of the 13 Tribes, which may further account for it, that all the 13 Sons and their Wives, were not born in the Space of 52 Years, from *Joktan's* Marriage.—It appears, by this Calculation, that it could not, in the Nature of Things, be much sooner than the Year 219, or 221, after the Deluge, that the 13th Son of *Joktan* could be furnished with a competent Number of Children, to assist him in his Plantation. But it is highly probable that it must be much later. For his eldest would have been adult, only about the Year 240, not being then 30 Years of Age, and one or two grown up towards Manhood, would have been Assistance little enough, when all the rest were but Boys or Children.

3. So that I fix the Settlement of this Family, about the Year of the *Æra* of the Deluge, 240. And this being the only Family, in which the Names of the Planters are set down, and the Line of their Descent determined by *Moses*, for the thirteenth Son of *Joktan* was an Head of a Tribe at that Time; we may I think, from this Account, make a very probable Conjecture, as to the Time of the general Dispersion; that it was a few Years, under, or over, the Year 240, after the Flood.

For Confirmation of this Opinion, I further observe, That it appears, by Calculation, that in ordinary Descent, according to the Method of reckoning before-mentioned, there could be such an Encrease of Mankind, as to make the Dispersion feasible; there might be, in the Year 240, above 60,000 Persons born; and in the Course of Nature, not one dead, except what might happen by Contingences, to that Year.—There might now be some obvious Inconveniences in their Continuance together, arising from their Numbers.

*Moses* tells us the general Dispersion was in *Peleg's* Days, and also how long *Peleg* lived. He tells us, that the thirteenth Son of *Joktan* was an Head of a Tribe at this Time. We find, by Calculation, that there might be a considerable Number of People now in the World; and then common Sense informs us, (tho' the *Historian* were silent) that it would be natural to think of *dividing*; when there were more general Conveniences in separating, than staying together; just as it would be natural to think of *keeping together*, while



there were more Conveniences in *that*, than in a Separation. They were, now, all in one Country; there was no other, from which to import any Commodities. Their Ground for Agriculture and Pasturage was together; for Flax as well as other Grain; and if there was little Flax in those Eastern Countries, there might, probably, be the Cotton Tree, or Silk Worm, which would require the Cultivation of the Mulberry Tree, and such like. This would oblige them to enlarge their Bounds, till they came to bad Land; which would not be worth their Labour, when they had all the World before them. Ground would want them, as soon as ever they wanted Ground. This would put them upon seeking for it. But then *Noah* would be induced to make this Division prudently *general*; that there might be a due Impartiality among them all. — And finally, I add, That tho' they might for some Years begin to perceive the Expediency of a Separation; yet the *particular* Time might be fixed by *Revelation*, or a divine Monition to *Noah*, that all might more readily comply with it. The third Character of Time, mentioned by *Moses*, is this, that the general Dispersion was perfected before the Birth of *Haran*. For *Haran* died in the Land of his Nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees. *Gen. xi. 28.* It is evident, from this Passage, that the World was divided into little Countries, and distinguished by Names of Places, before the Birth of *Haran*; for we have here both the Name of the Place and People where he was born, and where he died, which they retained to the Days of *Moses*.

*Haran* was the eldest Son of *Terah* who is mentioned by *Moses*, and therefore he was born in the 70th Year of *Terah's* Life, which was 292 Years after the Deluge. For *Terah* was born in the 222d Year of that *Æra*, according to the *Hebrew* Chronology; and  $222 + 70 = 292$ . *Haran* was certainly elder than *Nabor*, for *Nabor* married his Daughter. *Gen. xi. 29.* He was elder than *Abraham*, for *Lot* the Son of *Haran* appears not to have been much younger than *Abraham*. He had Daughters married in *Sodom*, for he had Sons-in-Law there, and two Virgin Daughters, who fled with him from the Desolation of those Cities. *Gen. xix. 14.* It was after the Recovery of *Lot* from his Captivity, by the Eastern Princes in Confederacy against *Sodom*, that a Promise was given to *Abraham*, that he should have a Son. *Gen. xv. 1, 4.* This was ten Years after *Abraham's* Coming to *Canaan*. The Destruction of the wealthy Cities of the Plain was in the same Year, in which the Promise of *Isaac* was made; in which, as we have noted, *Lot* had Children married in *Sodom*; so that *Lot* could not be much younger than *Abraham*. Further; *St. Stephen* observes, *Acts vii. 24.* That, when his Father was dead, *Abraham* removed from *Charran*, towards *Canaan*. *Terah* died at 205 Years old, *Abraham* was 75 Years old at leaving *Charran*, after his Father's Death, therefore he was born in the 130th Year of *Terah*; for  $205 - 75 = 130$ . And this Account of *St. Stephen* doth not contradict any Thing which *Moses* asserts; and therefore must be admitted as a good Explanation of him. — *Moses* informs us that *Terah* was 70, and begat three Sons. But sure, there is no Reason



Reason to suppose them all born in the same Year; it was only the eldest of these three Sons that was born in the 70th Year of *Terah*. Neither doth *Moses* say that any of these Sons were the *eldest* Sons of *Terah*; or that they were all his Sons; he might have several before *Haran*; as the *Patriarchs* before him had each of them Children, from about 30 Years of their Age severally. But, as these three were all remarkable Persons, and Ancestors of the *Hebrew Nation*, by both the Male and Female Line, as *Rebekah* and *Rachel*, as well as *Isaac* and *Jacob*; they might be honoured with a Name in the sacred Genealogy. Tho' many, both elder and younger, were omitted. *Nabor* and *Abraham* seem to have been among the younger Children of *Terah*. *Haran*, who was born in his 70th Year, might be at Man's Estate in his 100th or 110th Year; and so he might have Children, as old, or older than *Abraham*; and others something younger, as *Lot* and *Nabor's* Wife, and probably *Sarah*. The whole History of these Descents may be reduced to a thorough Consistency, that *Haran* might be *Abraham's* Brother, tho' much elder; that *Haran* might be born after the Dispersion, and therefore that the Dispersion was before 292 of the *Æra* of the Flood; and that *Terah* might have had several Children before the 70th Year of his Age, which, for Reasons unknown to us, are passed over in Silence. From these two Characters of Time, the Dispersion is circumscribed both Ways. It could not be before *Joktan's* 13th Son was the Head of a Tribe; and it must be before the Nativity of *Haran*, because Towns and Countries were distinguished by Names at that Time.

## C H A P. VIII.

*On the Persons concerned in the general Dispersion.*

THE general Dispersion was headed and conducted by the younger Generations, who were then in, or not much past their Prime of Manhood; and that none of the *Longeval Patriarchs* accompanied their Tribes into the new Colonies.



## S E C T. I.

*The Mother Country not deserted, nor left to the younger Generations.*

THE Mother Country, or that Region which was first cultivated by Noah and his Sons, and their growing Posterity, before the Dispersion, could not be supposed to be left a Desolation at that Time; and deserted to run to waste again, after it had been brought to such Perfection, by above 200 Years Culture. I have observed this Incongruity, in supposing them to forsake their Ground, even much earlier, and it would be still greater to suppose it now. There can but be *three* Suppositions made here, either, (*first*,) That, at the Dispersion, the most ancient Planters sought new Grounds, and left the old one quite waste. Or, (*Secondly*), That the ancient Planters left the cultivated Country to the younger Generations, while they went abroad themselves. Or, (*Thirdly*), That they staid at home themselves, in their own Houses, among their own Improvements, and sent the younger Generations abroad, to plant and settle the uncultivated World.—Both the first Suppositions are obviously unreasonable, and therefore must be rejected. But the last is very reasonable and natural. Here Noah and the elder Patriarchs all settled together, and must be sufficiently accommodated with all necessary, earthly Pleasures and Conveniences. And who so fit to take up their Rest in the *Mother* Plantation, as those eminent Ancients, under whose Inspection, Labour and Care it was grown up to that Perfection?

## S E C T. II.

*The Dispersion conducted by Peleg and his Contemporaries.*

I WILL suppose then that the general Dispersion, which was prophesied of, that it *should be*, and historically related, that *it was* in Peleg's Days, was led out by Peleg himself, and his Contemporaries of all the three Lines, which were about the same Age with this memorable Founder of the new World. By Calculation, according to the general Rules of Computation already laid down, of their having Children at the Interval of two Years, and all the Men, being married at 30, at a Medium. The Contemporaries of Peleg would be as follow:

Shem's 46th Son	} All born in the Year 92, by this Calculation.
Arphaxad's 31st	
Salah's 16th	
Heber's 1st. Peleg himself.	

Now



Now as these were all Contemporaries, they might be, for any thing that appears, one as fit as another, to be sent abroad with the different Colonies. There might be Difference among them, as to Capacity or Activity, so that some might not be quite so fit for this high Trust, that were born in the same Year with *Peleg*; and so one a few Years older might be desired, or be willing to go. But this could make no great Breach in the general Plan. So that we may suppose this to be the general Age of the principal Leaders, *i. e.* about the Age of *Peleg*. And, as I have endeavoured to prove, by the Characters of Time, that it must have been about 240 Years after the Flood; the Leaders, *Peleg* and his Contemporaries would have been of very suitable Years for conducting so momentous a Revolution. They would be old enough for Authority, and not too old for Activity. This will entirely agree with every thing that *Moses* relates, concerning this great Event. *Peleg* might be thus distinguished prophetically by this Name, as his Age was the Standard for the Age of the Leaders.—Again; it will most appositely correspond with *Nimrod's* being a principal Leader of the House of *Cush*. For he might be the 31st Son of *Cush* = 31st of *Arphaxad* = 46th of *Ham* = *Peleg*, and born in the same Year. So that, by Years, he might be of as much Authority as any of that Line; and, by a peculiar, enterprizing Temper, he might engross more than his Share. This totally dissipates all the Difficulty, which some learned Men have imagined, as to his being only the third from *Noah*, when *Peleg* was the fifth. For all Objection to their being Contemporaries entirely vanishes, upon this natural and sober Way of computing Descents, in those Ages of Longevity.

## S E C T. III.

*On inhabiting the Mother Country, after the Dispersion, by the more aged Persons.*

WE are next to account for the Remaining of a sufficient Number of Inhabitants, with *Noah* and the elder Patriarchs, in the Mother Country, and yet furnishing sufficient Draughts for the Colonies which were to go away. I have supposed that all, or however the greatest Part of those, who were married before *Peleg*, might stay at home in the original Settlement. And they with their younger Children, who were not yet marriageable, might afford a competent Number for the Management of the ancient Grounds. But that all, who were married in the same Year with *Peleg*, and all who married after that Year, in all the Lines, might go abroad in the general Dispersion, in different Tribes under proper Leaders; and fall into proper Subdivisions, as Prudence and Convenience directed.

In



In the Year 240 after the Flood, the Patriarch's Sons were married as follows :

*Shem's* Sons married before and after *Peleg*.

<i>Shem's</i> married before <i>Peleg</i>	45	-	after <i>Peleg</i>	59	-	104
<i>Arphaxad's</i>	-	-	30	-	59	89
<i>Salah's</i>	-	-	15	-	59	74
<i>Heber's</i>	-	-	-	-	59	59
<i>Peleg's</i>	-	-	-	-	44	
<i>Ren's</i>	-	-	-	-	29	
<i>Serug's</i>	-	-	-	-	15	
<i>Nabor's</i>	-	-	-	-	all unmarried.	

*Terah* might be near marriageable, in 240.

I am sensible that this Calculation a little over-runs two or three Generations, as mentioned by *Moses*; for *Arphaxad* had not his Son, 'till 35; and *Heber*, 'till 34. But others might have Children at 25, and 26. So that (I think) a Medium may be fixed at 30. I must also note that, in the general Calculation, I have made no Allowance for the Daughters. But, if we may suppose that the Women were adult at 20, as the Men were at 30, then at 10 Years Interval there might be five Daughters grown up to the Age of Puberty, for five Sons, who might each be 20, when the Men were 30. They might easily intermarry, as *Shem's* Sons with *Japhet's* Daughters; so that there could be no Necessity for incestuous Matches after the Flood, whatever might be the Case in *Adam's* Family at first. This is no unnatural Calculation of the Difference of Age in Men and Women; for the connubial Union, they counted a greater in the Age of *Hesiod*, 15 at 30. *Oper. et Dies*, lib. 2.\*

It appears, by what has been offered above, that a pretty clear Account may, on our Scheme, be given, both of inhabiting the original Country after the Dispersion, so that it should not be laid waste again; and also of planting the World with new Colonies, to a considerable Extent, in a little Time. *Shem* would have 45 Sons with him, all married before *Peleg*; *Arphaxad* 30; *Salah* 15. These must, in the common Course of Nature, be all Heads of considerable Tribes. For, by Calculation, *Shem's* second Son might have had 29 Children; his third 28; his fourth 27; his fifth 26, and so on, all settled in large Families, with a numerous Posterity. Now, if there were so many

\* Μητρικουσαν ἔσαν μαλα πολλ' ἀπολειπων  
Μητ' ἐπιβεις μαλα πολλὰ, γαμῶ δὲ τοὶ ὄριον οἶτος  
Ἡ δὲ γυνὴ τετορ' ἦβων, πεμπλῶδε γαμοῖτο.

When you have numbered thrice ten Years in Time,  
The Age mature when Manhood dates it's Prime;  
Whom fifteen Springs have crowned, a Virgin wed.



# CHIEFLY RELIGIOUS.

143

many of the *Patriarch's* own Sons, *Shem's* 45, *Arphaxad's* 30, *Salah's* 15, it would be thus :

	45
	30
	15
	—
	90
These in the three Lines will be	— 3
	—
	270

And supposing none of them too old to have Children, there would be, from them, 270 Children in the very Year of the Dispersion. There were by this Calculation 15 unmarriageable in the last 30 Years of each Pair, which could not go off from their Father's House ; all these Encreases would leave the Country, where *Noah* resided, sufficiently populous. And further, so much Cattle would be carried off with the Planters, and so great a Quantity of Grain both for Seed and for a Stock of Provisions, that there would be a great Abatement of their Care and Labour in both Pasturage and Tillage, proportionable to the Diminution of their Hands or Numbers in the *primitive* Settlement.—I add, that there would be a competent Number of those who went abroad, all, except the younger Sort, being certainly in the Course of Nature Breeders, to furnish a great Variety of Colonies up and down the World. If we consider how the Progress would naturally be, in every little Tribe or Society, when they had so much Ground to choose out of ; they must spread fast, and pretty far in a little Time, when once they begun to travel. They would settle near good Rivers, or in fine Plains, in the most promising Situations. Some on the *Indus*, some on the *Tigris*, others on the *Euphrates*, the *Jordan*, and the *Nile*. Others near the Sea, as the *Mediterranean*, the *Euxine*, the *Caspian* and *Persian* Gulf, or the *Indian Ocean*. All this is natural. They would again live a while in Tents, till they met with Places to their Mind, to build and settle upon, as *Noah* and his Family after the Flood did before them. And it seems not improbable, that the Ruins of great Antediluvian Cities might direct them to Places of Settlement, both as there would be Materials of Building gathered together, and as they might be the best Indications of the Fertility of the neighbouring Soil.

S E C T.



## S E C T. IV.

*The Longeval Patriarchs travelled not with the Colonies, which they sent out. Proved by several Arguments.*

**A**S the Earth could be most conveniently divided, and the People best accommodated, by some staying in the *Mother Country*, that neither *all* should *stay*, nor *all* *travel*; so it is not probable *Noah* should travel, nor that his elder Sons and Grandsons should ever remove far from the *venerable Patriarch*, to the Day of his Death.

1. There are several natural Reasons to induce us to this Opinion. They must have so much natural Affection, so much Reverence, Veneration and Esteem for him, that they could not think of leaving him, in the unsuitable Conversation of young People; nor would they be willing to leave, without Necessity, the Pleasure and continued Improvement they might have from his long experienced Wisdom and Virtue. He and his Sons had seen both Worlds, and must have Subjects of Conversation peculiar to themselves, as we see aged People have more exquisite Satisfaction in reviewing the distant Scenes of their younger Life, than those which are more recent. And his Elder Grandsons and Great Grandsons having been long accustomed to his Conversation, and formed to every manly Science, under his Care, would naturally have a Relish for those Subjects, which had entertained their vacant Hours so long, and not think of forsaking him, unless under some Necessity of doing so, which could not be. Young Generations would not be fit Society for the venerable old Patriarch; and the Labour of instructing them in the Elements of *Science* and *Religion*, of Arts and Business, would be too fatiguing for the great Father of Mankind then to undertake. He might amuse himself, now and then, as old Persons do, with the Prattle of their Children, with the pretty Enquiries and Observations of their Youths and Virgins; but his proper Society would be with the elder Generations. From all which I conclude that neither his Sons, nor any of the elder Generations, who had been favoured with a long Intimacy with him, would leave *Noah* to the Day of his Death, which was 350 Years after the Flood.

2. When *Noah* died, all the Longeval Patriarchs were growing old themselves, and so would become unfit for the Fatigue of planting new Colonies, tilling new Grounds, or building new Cities. *Shem*, *Ham* and *Japhet* could not be supposed to separate from *Noah*, and leave him in old Age to the Care of young Persons, who might be comparatively Strangers to him, and not have that Tenderneſs and personal Honour for him, as themselves had. They would love to be near his Person, to discharge all the Offices of filial Piety in their Power. And the same Reasons might keep their own Sons of the eldest Sort,



Sort, to pay their dutiful Attendance on *their* declining Years. This pious dutiful Care of Parents is very eminent in all *Pagan* Antiquity, as well as *Sacred*. As in *Aeneas's* Care of *Anchises*. The Respect to *Priam*, *Nestor*, *Peleus*, and all the other Ancients at *Troy*, shewn by their Sons.\* At *Noah's* Death the Age of the Patriarchs was as below :

<i>Shem</i>	-	-	-	448 Years old.
<i>Arphaxad</i>	-	-	-	438
<i>Salah</i>	-	-	-	313
<i>Heber</i>	-	-	-	283

And, tho' *Heber* might not be a great deal past his Prime, and so his eldest Son, *Peleg*, might leave him, yet none of the elder were thus left. Besides, *Peleg* was now dead: And (probably) all his Contemporaries of all the three Lines, who had gone abroad at the Head of the several Tribes in the Dispersion; for *Peleg* died 10 Years before *Noah*.

3. Had the *Patriarchs* removed, at the Head of their Colonies, and resided in their several Settlements, they must have been mentioned in *Egypt*, when *Abraham* came there. Those of *Ham's* House must have been all alive, long after *Abraham* came to *Canaan*, and they must have been necessarily at the Head of the Government of the respective Countries, in which they resided. † *Isaac Vossius* makes use of this very Argument against *Noah's* being alive at this Time, that he is *never once named*. And it will be as good an Argument against the other *Patriarchs*. But we need not, as *Vossius* doth, reject the Authority of the *Hebrew* Chronology for this Reason, since I think it is much more naturally accounted for on our Scheme.—*Abraham* came into *Canaan* in the 427th Year of the *Æra* of the Deluge. For *Terah* was born in the 222d Year, and *Abraham* in the 130th of *Terah's* Life, and removed to *Canaan* from *Haran*, when he was 75. So that the Reckoning stands thus,  $222 + 130 = 352 + 75 = 427$  Years after the Flood.—It was not long after his Coming to *Canaan*, before he was constrained, by a Famine in that Country, to go to *Egypt*. If this Famine happened two or three Years after his Coming to *Canaan*, then he went down to *Egypt* 430 Years after the Flood. Then it is plain that, if the Posterity of *Ham* lived to about the same Age with the Posterity of *Shem*, in the parallel Generations, which I see no reason to question.—If I say they did so, then none could be Kings of *Egypt* at that Time, but some of these venerable *Patriarchs*, *Ham*, or his Son, or Grandson, answerable to the Longeval Lines in the Family of *Shem*, who were all alive.

\* Even the fierce *Achilles*, in *Homer*, is amiable and lovely in his filial Duty and his Friendship, tho' inexorable in his Resentments. He appears with all the Tenderness and Softness of a Virgin, when he speaks of his Father, or his Friend.

† *Vossius de Ætat. Mund.* p. 17.



<i>Shem</i>	<i>Ham</i>		} died after the Flood	502
<i>Arphaxad</i>	<i>Misraim</i>	<i>Canaan</i>		440
<i>Salah</i>	<i>Ananim</i>	<i>Sidon</i>		470
<i>Heber</i>	<i>Philistim</i>	his Son		531

The following Table sets forth their Age at *Abraham's* Coming to *Egypt*, and how long they survived that Transaction.

<i>Shem</i>	<i>Ham</i>	Lived after <i>Abraham's</i> Coming	72	Aged	528
<i>Arphaxad</i>	<i>Misfor</i>	-	10	-	428
<i>Salah</i>	<i>Ananim</i>	-	40	-	393
<i>Heber</i>	<i>Philistim</i>	-	101	-	363

If any of these *Patriarchs* were on the Throne of *Egypt* when *Abraham* came there, it is very surprising, as *Vossius* allows, that he should take no more Notice of them on account of their venerable Years. The Decency and Propriety of *Abraham's* Manners, in all other Instances, would lead us to expect a parallel Decency in his Behaviour towards them. They would be much more honourable, on account of their Years and *Patriarchal* Character, than on account of their *regal* one; could it have been possible, in their Life-time, to separate these Characters. But it is plain that, if they had come abroad with their Colonies, no one could have been in the regal Power, but one of themselves. No younger Persons could be supposed to reign or exercise Authority over these venerable Fathers of the whole Colony. It could never be endured by the rest of the People, that so unnatural a Dominion should take place.

But if any of those ancient *Patriarchs* were then on the Throne, the Story is a great Incongruity in Nature. The Princes of Pharaoh told him of Sarah's Beauty. These Princes of Pharaoh must have been his elder Sons and his Grandsons; for the younger Generations cannot be supposed to be taken into the Councils and Familiarity of the ancient *Patriarch Monarch*, especially to the Exclusion of these Sons. If this King of *Egypt* was *Ham*, he was then about the 526th Year of his Age; for I take *Ham* to be younger than *Shem*. If it was *Misfor*, or *Misraim*, he was 428, and then his Princes, Sons, or Grandsons, would be about 493, and 363 Years of Age. Our learned Sir *John Marsham* thinks, that *Ham* himself first reigned in *Egypt*, but the more common Opinion is, that *Misraim* was the first King, the same with the *Menes* of *Herodotus*, and who stands at the Head of several *Dynasties* in *Manetho*, and also that of *Eratosthenes*. But natural Criticism overturns all these Conjectures, if this History of *Abraham* be true. It outrages Nature to suppose, that these ancient Princes, the Sons and Grandsons of the *Patriarch King*, should immediately entertain their venerable Parent with the idle Tale

of



of the Beauty of a wandering Stranger. It is wholly incongruous both to their Years, and to their Relations, as Father and Children. Children have ever had such a Reverence for Parents, as to conceal their own juvenile Enormities from them; and sure it would be a Familiarity very indecent, to presume to propose Amours to them. But, according to *Moses*, the Princes of *Pharaoh* mentioned her Beauty to the King; and she was brought into *Pharaoh's* House; which Story would be incredible, because absurdly unnatural, if the *Patriarchs* had come abroad with, and so been in the Government of their Colonies.—Again, *Abraham's* own Fears would have been absurd, if he knew who filled the Throne, and composed the Council at that Time. He could not think that Persons of 3, 4, or 5 hundred Years old, could dishonour such eminent Authority and Years, by troubling themselves with a wandering Youth, or the Girl that accompanied him.—But finally, on Supposition that the *Longeval Patriarchs* all staid with *Noah*, then the King of *Egypt* at the Time of *Abraham's* going, might be of a common Age, or a young Person. *Egypt* might, perhaps, be governed by Princes in a lineal, hereditary Succession, and so a young Heir might then be come to the Throne. And then his Princes, though something elder than himself, might be supposed naturally enough to give the King an Account of this fair Stranger, as they knew his Gaiety and Taste. Then their Proceedings and *Abraham's* Apprehensions were both natural, and the whole Narrative carries the Marks of Credibility; whereas, on the other Supposition, the Story has the Air of Legend and Romance.—I have insisted longer on this authentic Piece of ancient History, because, considering the natural Manners of human Kind, it amounts to a Demonstration, that *Pharaoh* and his Princes could not be *Ham* or *Misraim*, and their elder Sons; and yet, by the cotemporary Sons of *Shem*, it appears that they were then *all* alive; therefore, by this plain History, as well as other Arguments of Probability from the Reason of Things, we conclude that the *Longeval Patriarchs* did not come abroad.

4. I add another Argument, to prove that the elder Generations staid with *Noah* in the East, viz. That *Canaan*, *Sidon* the Father of the Children of *Heth*, and other *Canaanitish* Tribes, who were in the Genealogical Line of Time, cotemporary with *Arphaxad*, *Salah* and *Heber*, must have been in the Course of Nature, all alive, long after the Year 427. And yet we have not the least Hint of *Abraham's* meeting with any of them, in his travelling thro' the whole Land of *Canaan*. If he had met with any of these venerable Ancients, he could not, without the highest Indecency, have omitted paying them particular Honours, and such an Event could scarce have been passed over, without Notice, in History. This Argument *Vossius* makes use of, to prove that they were dead at that Time, *Æt. Mund.* 17. And so to support his *Septuagint Chronology*. But, as I noted before, this will be accounted for, much better, on our Scheme; and is preferable, because it leaves the original *Hebrew Chronology*, in it's proper Precedency to any Translation.—We see, in the



the next Generation but one, after this, what particular Respect was paid to Age, by the Behaviour of the King of *Egypt* to *Jacob*, and his receiving a Blessing from him. But, in all *Abraham's* Migrations, he seems not to have met with any, but Contemporaries; Fathers and Sons, such as might commonly live together in the Course of Nature. But none so much elder than himself, as to require any distinguishing Veneration from him, or to have such universal Regard from the People. And yet, this is a Decency observed in all ancient *Historians*, and even Poets, who follow Nature, to take Notice of any remarkable for their extraordinary Age, as well as other extraordinary Qualities. Thus you may know, by almost every Speech in *Homer*, where he is named, that *Nestor* was remarkable for his Years, as *Achilles* was for a superlative Bravery, *Ajax* for Strength, *Ulysses* for Sagacity and Penetration. — So that, upon the whole View, I can see no Reason to believe, that tho' all these Longeval Fathers were then alive, when *Abraham* came to *Canaan*; yet that any of them were ever in *Canaan* with their Posterity. But they all staid with *Noah* till his Death, and grew old together in the original Settlement.

## C H A P. IX.

*On the Valedictory Instruction of the Tribes, before they went off from Noah.*

**T**HIS Separation would be attended with a general *Valedictory* Instruction from the Patriarchs who staid, to the Colonies which they sent off, in the general Dispersion.—What Methods were made use of, to dispose the different Tribes contentedly to take their different Routs; and to take up some with meaner Settlements than others, when they seem to have had an equal Right, is difficult to determine. Whether there was any particular Designation by *God*, or *Noah*, whether there was any Lot cast among the Leaders, or whether Primogeniture was allowed to give Right to a first Choice; must (I think) remain dubious. But this cannot be dubious, that *Noah* would proceed as wisely and prudently as he could, in directing the several Colonies to the utmost Precautions, both for Order, and Peace. As far as human Sagacity, assisted by such great Experience could go, he would labour to guard them against all Emergencies, apprize them of the Danger of all inconvenient Passions, to provide against Animosities within the several Colonies, or wicked Emulations betwixt the different ones. This was a very important Period. Their Posterity were now going out upon that grand Expedition, which would separate them from the *Patriarchs* Conversation for ever. And, when they were now taking leave of them, never to see them more; private Affections and publick Spirit would each exert themselves to the utmost, that



that they might send out their Tribes with the very best Furniture possible, both as to *Religion, Sciences and Arts*.—This would be a solemn Season of new Instruction, Direction and Admonition. Here would naturally be expected a distinct Repetition of all the *capital Articles of their Faith*. Here they would have, from *Noah*, a final and farewell Relation of the *Creation, the State of Innocency, and the Fall; the Institution of Worship, and the Hope of Acceptance and the promised Seed*. Here they would have a Repetition of the *Account of the Deluge*, and the Causes of it, the *Impiety of the World*. Here they would not only have a clear Review of the *Facts and Revelations*, which *Adam* and *Noah* had the Knowledge of, personally; but also a general Compend of the Inferences of Doctrine and Duty, speculative and practical, which they had deduced from the Facts, that the dispersed Colonies might have a Fund of useful Knowledge to set up with, in the new World. They would, methinks, especially urge and strenuously inculcate the fundamental Doctrine of *the Being of a God, his Unity and Perfections*; as the sole Object of their supreme Love and Fear, and Trust and Worship, to engage them and awe them to Religion. They would be like, *lastly*, after all their Instructions, to close the solemn Transaction with affectionate Exhortations. They would, with earnest Tenderness, recommend it to them, as their last Advice, to make Conscience of a *religious Behaviour towards God*, as the only Security of a Blessing. And then, of the Practice of all Virtue and Righteousness towards each other, Benevolence and Love, Peace and Friendship, Honesty and Truth, Temperance and Chastity, as the great Instruments and Means of a general Happiness.—This is natural Behaviour, in all pious Parents, when they are sending their near Relations away, to settle in any remote Country. And, as the *Patriarch* himself was an eminently pious Person, it is natural to conclude, that they would act in the same Manner that pious Parents do, when under the Direction of so celebrated an Head. It may be thought surprizing, that we have so few distinct Histories of the setting out of Colonies, in the past Ages, since this great general one. But perhaps, there were not many regularly sent to people vacant Countries, but only *Military Parties* to conquer the Land, from a People already in Possession. Or Wanderers, who were driven by Necessity, to shelter where they could; and so in slow Process of Time grew into Nations.

The glorious Planters of the first Colonies in *New-England*, may, perhaps, afford us as near a Pattern of such a pious careful Way of sending out Colonies to people the uncultivated World, as any to be met with in *History*. They were, indeed, peculiar in some Circumstances, they fled from the Unkindness of cruel and unreasonable Oppressors, whereas these original Colonies removed from their tenderest Friends. But these greatly resembled them in others, for they withdrew from *Noah*, and a cultivated Part of the World into untilled Desarts; and the *American Planters* withdrew from this pleasant Land to an howling Wilderness. But, in their doing so, there were many of



of these affectionate farewell Exhortations and Instructions from the Friends they left.\*

But this Account I have given, tho' we have no History of the like Proceedings in other Colonies, to enforce the Reception of it, is plainly natural, and in Character, considering how wise and virtuous and religious a Man *Noah* was, and therefore it is probably very near the Truth. This Transaction might, perhaps, take up some Years, in which Time the *elder Patriarchs* might often convene the Heads of the Tribes, one Family one Day, and then another, to fix in their Minds a clear Knowledge of these religious Principles; while they were making all other necessary Preparations for this last Remove from them.

## CHAP. X.

*On the Decays of Tradition, after the general Dispersion took Place.*

FROM the Dispersion to *Moses*, the Tradition of those ancient Truths must insensibly decay, and fall into Obscurity.

These Valedictory Instructions were the last Addition to their Fund of Religious Knowledge, with which they were to set up in their several Colonies. When these were to be carried down by Oral Tradition from the Father, who had his Account of the Facts from Eye-witnesses, to the Son, who had only his Father's Report to rely upon, the Tradition would gradually weaken and decline. It is not necessary to enter into a nice Calculation in how many Ages Tradition would sink into a State of *Evanescence*; tho' it has been attempted by some curious Writers. But it is plain, from the Nature of Things, that it must be liable to a gradual Declension, as to the Materials of the Tradition, whatever be said as to the Degree of Evidence, unless there was some more permanent Way of recording past Events, than *Oral Tradition*. But then there is a great Difference in the Preservation of ancient Truths, according to the Foundations, on which those Truths are built, or from which they are inferred. Those Doctrines which are inferred from outward, visible Things, which always subsist, may remain, as long as those external Objects remain, from which they are inferred. Whereas those Doctrines, which are deduced from Facts long since past, which are to be known only by Tradition, must become more precarious, as the Tradition becomes more scanty, obscure or dubious.—To apply this to the Case before us.—The Treasure of Religious Knowledge, which *Noah* committed to the Care of Mankind, when they separated from him, consisted of Two Parts, An History of many eminent Facts,

\* Vid. *Mather. Hist. New England. Prince. Annals. Vol. 1. Neal. Hist.*



Facts, and A System of Doctrinal Truths inferred from these Facts. As to the *first* Part, or the History of Facts, these were not all exactly alike. For the History of the *Creation* of the Universe by *One God*, was only partly historical, even that *One God* made all Things, but then that they *were made*, every one could see. And, when once Men had a Notion of an invisible, spiritual Being, or infinite Mind, as the Author of the Universe, it could never be lost, if Men were but faithful to themselves. The Works of Nature remained in all their wondrous Beauty and useful Order, to furnish daily Evidence of the *Being of a God*. And whatever could be inferred from the Works of Nature, as to the Perfections of God; or from those Perfections, as to our Duty to him; could be found out in every Age, while Men's reasonable Faculties remained, with which to argue from these *Data* in the visible World. So that God did not, in any Age, leave himself without Witnesses, or Evidence, of his own Being and Perfections. The Sun taught them this Lesson by Day, and the Moon and Stars by Night.—But then, as to those Doctrines, which were founded on the other Facts, or at least were discovered in the shortest Way, by the Consideration of those Facts, such as the *State of Innocency and the Fall*; the *Expulsion from Paradise*; the *Institution of Worship*, the *Victory of the Seed of the Woman*; the *universal Deluge*, and the *Causes of it*, the *prevailing Abominations of the World*: These Doctrines, I say, so far as they were only inferred from these Facts, must become fainter in their Evidence, as these Facts became more dubious, or were perverted or misrepresented.

## S E C T. I.

*The Causes of the Decay of Tradition, from the Dispersion, to the Time of giving the Law.*

FROM this Time the Tradition must be subject to a gradual Declension, which though it might not be very precipitate, yet would be a constant Thing. Suppose there were in each Colony five Generations, who had all seen *Noah*; and had, each of them, their Informations from the great *Patriarch* himself, as *Peleg*, *Reu*, *Serug*, *Nahor* and *Terah*; the Tradition would be pretty perfect, while those remained in the World. But supposing each of these to have ten Children, who never saw *Noah*, being born after the Dispersion; then there must be 50, who must have all their Information of these past Events, from the first five. If these 50 had each 10 Children, then, admitting the like Increase, 500 in the third Series, 5000 in the fourth, 50,000 in the fifth, and so on, who must respectively depend on Relators, that went before them, who were in each Succession, a further Degree removed



removed from *Noah*, and any Eye-witnesses of the Flood, Patriarchs, or any, who had Correspondence with the old *Patriarchs*, who had conversed with *Adam*. There would be now, in the very Nature of Things, a Dimness insensibly prevailing upon these *ancient* Facts; and they would be overshadowed and obscured by Distance and the Interposition of other Objects. And, in every Family, the like Causes would operate, more or less, to produce the like Effect, at the like Distance of Time.

1. Forgetfulness of many material Circumstances might occasion an imperfect Tradition. It is no Wonder that many Circumstances, about the State of Innocency and the Fall, Paradise and the forbidden Fruit, the Temptation and the Success of it, should slide out of their Memories, concerning Things so remote. The great Distance in Time would occasion their making but a faint Impression upon them; so that, though they might believe them all to be true, yet they would not make so striking an Impression, or so distinct a one, like Objects at a Distance.—Multiplicity of recent Events must also perpetually engage their Attention, which could not be the Case of *Adam*, as to the first Facts, nor of *Noah*, as to the Deluge. Those were, as to them, their greatest Concerns, and would so fix on their Minds, that they could never wear out.—But those who were, after the Dispersion, busy in planting a new World, would be all talking of their settling such a Country, building such a City, passing such a River, their Wars, Emulations and Conflicts with such or such neighbouring Colonies, or the like. Parents would be most frequently speaking of their own Transactions, the Things which they had done or suffered, seen and observed in their own Days; whereby it must happen, that the ancient Events would be less perfectly remembered. So that not half of the 50,000 would relate all the Particulars of the *Fall* and the *Deluge* perfectly right, thro' Defect of Memory.

2. A *Misapprehension* of the Account of those ancient Facts, might be another Source of Depravation of the Tradition. For, if any of them misapprehended the original Accounts, they must misrepresent them unavoidably in their speaking of them to their Posterity. They might mistake, as to the Nature of the Temptation, as that the Serpent was only an Example to *Eve* of eating the forbidden Fruit, and there was no other Sollicitation. Or they might take it to be a Seduction to Sin, and yet that an evil, and not a good Being drove them out of Paradise, out of malicious Sport with their Weakness. Now, whatever material Circumstances were either forgot or misunderstood, those, who learned the Story thus corrupt, could teach it only as they had it. And then, if they argued from it, they must make erroneous Inferences.

3. Among such Numbers, many might *designedly* corrupt and misrepresent these ancient Facts, out of a *Dislike* to Truth, and in order to weaken the Principles of *Religion*. There would doubtless soon rise up among Mankind, both good and bad Men; and those might be of very different Capacities. Ingenious



nious bad Men might have a Dislike to the Principles of *Religion*, such as taught the Evil and Danger of Sin, &c. such as tended to lay Restraint on their inordinate Inclinations, and so might give the ancient Story a Turn more favourable to Sinners. As suppose their Expulsion from Paradise was set forth as the Victory of the Devil over them, and not as an Act of God's righteous Providence, in Punishment for Sin. On the like Principles, they might relate the History of the Flood, but not the Cause of it, *viz.* That the old World was very wicked; and so it would not be truly represented as any judicial Act of Providence towards enormous Offenders, but only as a great Wonder, that happened they knew not why, by some inexplicable Chance or Fate.

4. As this Variety, in the relating of the ancient Facts, would render the Tradition of them insensibly more dubious, contradictory and obscure, so this would lay a Foundation for endless Fables, concerning them, whereby the ancient Truth would be disguised, corrupted and lost. The Makers of amusing Fables not being very tenacious of, or scrupulous as to Truth; and meeting with Hearers not very scrupulous as to Evidence; the Credulity of the People would make those Fictions go down. But then the Tradition would hereby lose all it's noble and useful Probability, and degenerate into a mere Wonder. That ancient History of the Fall and the Flood, which contained a rational Account of the righteous Judgments of God, upon a disobedient undutiful World, would hereby be converted into unaccountable Accidents; or wondrous Fictions, of no Use and Edification to the World.

5. These original Facts, tho' of themselves very memorable, yet would almost vanish out of Sight, by the Interposition of other Objects, which would be perpetually presenting themselves to Notice, and call off the Attention from them, to other Things in every new Age. Later Events are generally most talked of, which weaken, and at last almost blot out the Remembrance of those distant ones, however considerable. We find it so, in all Ages. When the *Romans* invaded *Britain*, the Inhabitants could, doubtless, remember many of those noble Actions, in which they honourably, tho' unsuccessfully, defended their ancient Liberties, against the ambitious Invaders of the forfeited Privileges of their native Soil. But, when the Conquerors had settled a while, polished and fortified the Country, and had almost made it *Roman*, we need not doubt but, as they insensibly forgot the first Struggles, they would be more affected with the Invasions of the *Saxons*, more barbarous than the first Invaders. The Settlement of the *Saxons*, having brought on Ease at last, would be disturbed by the Invasions of the *Danes*, and the final Establishment of the *Normans*. But, tho' every successive Period was so well known, in the following one, yet it soon dwindled into Forgetfulness, as far as *Tradition* was concerned in the Preservation of each Period's Story. We know, at this Time, something of the Coming of *William III.* at the Revolution in 1688, and something of the Restoration in 1660, and the Civil Wars



Wars of 1641, by Tradition. But who knows any thing by Tradition, of the *Norman Conquest*, of the *Barons Wars*, of the *French Provinces*, held by our *English Monarchs*, of the Victories of *Cressy*, *Poitiers* or *Agincourt*, or of the bloody Contests of the Houses of *York* and *Lancaster*? There is scarce any Footstep of any one of these elder Events, in any Tradition, even in the Countries where the greatest Actions happened. There are scarce any Vestiges of ancient Facts, even in Family Stories, or material Monuments, where there are no Inscriptions. As in the ancient Monuments of *Stone-Henge*, and many such like, which are now thought to have been *Druid Temples*,\* but concerning which, there are no Traditions remaining, or that were known in the Days of our eldest Writers, even *Bede* himself. If we find that *Tradition* is frail, and soon grows dark in the latter Ages, why should it not be supposed to have been so then, in those earlier Ages, as it has been ever since; without any Assistance to *Oral Testimony* by *Books* or *Inscriptions*; and when the Age of Man was much shortened?

## S E C T. II.

*The Length of Time from the Dispersion to the Giving of the Law.*

THE Length of Time from the *Dispersion* to the Giving of the *Law*, and the *Revelation of Letters*, was so great, that we cannot but conclude, *Tradition* must have been in a very languishing and corrupt State about that Time.—If we calculate that there were 30 Years to a Generation in the successive ones after *Terah*, as it appears that there were before him, up to the Flood, according to the *Mosaic Genealogies*; we may soon find, by considering the Time from the *Dispersion* to the *Exodus*, how many Generations had run out.

The Year of the *Dispersion*, by our Reckoning, was about the 240th after the Flood. *Abraham* born in the 130th of *Terah*.

92 To the Birth of <i>Abraham</i>	} from the Dispersion.
100 To the Birth of <i>Isaac</i>	
60 To the Birth of <i>Jacob</i>	
130 To <i>Jacob's</i> going to <i>Egypt</i>	

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382

\* See *Stukley*.



If we allow one of the Ways of computing the 430 Years of the Habitation of the *Hebrew* Nation in *Egypt*, which the great *Gerard Vossius* defends, that they commenced from *Joseph's* or *Jacob's* going thither, then  $382 + 430 = 812$  Years, from the *Dispersion* to the Giving of the *Law*, and discovering of *Letters*. Then there will have passed 27 Generations of Men, for  $27 \times 30 = 810$  Years, betwixt these two celebrated *Epocha's*, the *Dispersion*, and the imparting the Knowledge of *Letters*.—And, if we take the other Computation, that the famous 430 Years commenced at the Migration, from *Haran* to *Canaan*, it will still be a great Length of successive Generations, for  $205 + 430 = 635$ , which will afford about 21 Generations; for  $30 \times 21 = 630$ .

This is the grand Period of *Tradition*, which I apprehend to have been wholly without the Use of *Letters*, from *Adam* to *Noah*; and from *Noah* to the general *Dispersion*; and thence to the Giving of the *Law*, in about the 80th Year of *Moses's* Life.—And then, it cannot be any Wonder, that any Tradition, in passing thro' the Hands of 27, or of 21 Generations, and thro' a Space of Time of 810, or 630 Years, should have become very scanty, and very obscure and dubious, so as to be but very little to be depended upon. And, accordingly, the Folly, Vanity and Inconsistency of the *Pagan* Traditions, are a collateral Evidence of the Truth, and Authenticity of the *Mosaic* *Chronology* and *History*. For the World appears to have been just as ignorant of any ancient *Religious* Truths, as it is natural to think that it should have been, in the given Circumstances, viz. at such a Distance of Time, as the *Hebrew* *Chronology* computes; and without any Assistance of *Alphabetical Letters*, either for Records, or monumental Inscriptions; and in so great a Reduction of the Length of Men's Lives.

### S E C T. III.

#### *On the Preservation of Tradition in the Abrahamic Family.*

**I** MUST, in the last Place, observe one very remarkable Circumstance in the *Abrahamic* Family, as to the late Time of the Birth of the several Successors in that House and Line; for hereby the ancient Traditions would be capable of being handed down by a few Persons, thro' a very long Series of Years. And it seems to have been one of the great Designs of Providence, in this extraordinary Line of Descents, to preserve the ancient Traditions of those primitive Facts, which were the Foundation of the primitive Religion, in a more perfect Manner, than it could have been, in the ordinary Course of Descents. This Family was separated from all the World, and so must be obliged to a frequent Meditation upon, and Conversation about, their own peculiar Affairs. The Reasons of their Separation were, probably, made



known to themselves more explicitly, than they are now recorded by *Moses*. *Terah* might be sensible that the Reason of his being required to undertake so tedious a Migration, in his old Age, was to avoid the Infection of the *Idolatry*, which was begun in his own Country; and to maintain a Belief of the Doctrine of the *Unity* and Perfections of *God*. It is plain that there were many of *Terah's* Posterity, who staid in *Chaldæa*; and perhaps only *Abraham* and *Lot*, as being of the most serious and religious Dispositions, accompanied *Terah*, in his Journey to *Haran*. However, if they did, they none of them went with *Abraham* to *Canaan*, except *Lot*. Hereby *Abraham's* Family were still kept separate from the rest of the World, and had a Kind of Manners and Conversation of their own. This Conversation must often turn on the ancient Truths, which would establish them in the Belief of the *One true God*, and their Homage to him. And the Preservation of it would not, in these Circumstances, be so difficult.—*Abraham* was born in the 130th Year of the Life of *Terah*, 41 Years before *Serug's* Death. So that he could bring down the Tradition, that *Serug* had from *Noah*, for 134 Years from him: For *Abraham* lived 175 Years, and was born 41 Years before *Serug's* Death,  $175 - 41 = 134$ . *Isaac* was born when *Abraham* was 100 Years old, and lived 180 Years, so that he could bring the Tradition down 105 Years after *Abraham's* Death,  $180 - 75 = 105$ ; and, if he was 15 at *Abraham's* Death, then he could bring the Tradition down 132 Years from *Abraham*. *Jacob* was born when *Isaac* was 60, and lived 147 Years, so that he could bring it down 27 Years after the Death of *Isaac*. For, in the same Way,  $147 - 120 = 27$ . And he was 15 at *Abraham's* Death. *Joseph* was born when *Jacob* was about 90, for he was 30 at his first Preferment, and *Jacob* was 130, when he came into *Egypt*, at which Time *Joseph* was about 40. He died, when he was 110, and *Jacob* at 147, so that *Joseph* could carry the Tradition down, about 43 Years after *Jacob's* Death. But then *Levi* lived 27 Years longer than *Joseph*, which might be owing to the Pomp and Luxury of a Court Life, which *Joseph* led; and so *Levi* might bring it down further to *Kobath*, than *Joseph* did to *Ephraim*.\* But further, as *Kobath* might be born, perhaps about the Time of their going down to *Egypt*; and might have *Amram*, among his last Children; he might carry the Tradition a great Way further down, to *Aaron* and *Moses*, who might also be among the younger Children of *Amram*. There is no Necessity of supposing that these venerable Fathers had no Children before, but these might be their Children in old Age, by either second, or even third Wives, who being in their Youth, might very well have Children by them, tho' the Fathers were in Years. And, tho' they might be but young Persons when their Fathers were in considerable Age; yet they would be like to be instructed in the Principles of Religion, among the first Branches of their Knowledge, and to retain them better. Thus it was possible to transmit the Tradition of those primitive Truths, from *Serug* and *Terah*, as they heard them

\* Vid. *Gerhard Vossius. Chronol. Sacra.* at large.



them from *Noah*, to *Moses* himself, in about five Hands, *Abraham*, *Jacob*, *Kobath*, *Amram* and *Moses*, or *Aaron*.—*Terab* could certainly speak to *Abraham*, of *Noah*, *Shem*, and the other *Patriarchs*, whom he left at the *Dispersion*; as well as of *Peleg*, *Reu* and *Serug*, with whom he came away; and could relate of his own Knowledge, all the ancient Truths, concerning the *Creation*, the *State of Innocency*, the *Fall*, the *promised Seed*, the *Institution of Worship*, the *Deluge*, and it's *Causes*, as well as it's *Effects*; that is, he could relate, of his own Knowledge, that he heard all these Things from *Noah* and *Shem* in Person. *Abraham* was about 75 when *Terab* died, and therefore could be initiated in this Knowledge when *Terab* was in the full Perfection of Memory. *Abraham* could not only fully instruct *Isaac* in all this Knowledge, but also *Esau* and *Jacob*, and relate it as from *Terab*, who had it from *Noah*.—*Jacob* could instruct *Kobath* at least, from whom *Aaron* could have the whole Treasure of this traditional Knowledge. And, tho' *Moses*, who was educated at Court, might not have this View of sacred Antiquity so distinct, as it was in the *Abrahamic* Family; yet it might soon be taught him, by his Brother, *Aaron*, when they came together. And, when God revealed to him the Art and Use of Writing, he, in the Leisure of the Wilderness, and by divine Direction, put down the *History* of these original Events in Writing. Which *Book* has, in the main, been brought safe and uncorrupt to our Hands, and will remain to the last Conflagration.—How perfectly these sacred Truths were preserved in the *Abrahamic* Family, we cannot determine; but, by this Account, it could not be any great Difficulty to preserve them thro' so few Successions. And besides, when they had no Writing, or Books, they must necessarily have been more careful of their Traditions; and, when they were separated so much from other Families, they must be like to preserve them more pure. These would be both Materials for *Moses* to make use of, in Writing the First Part of the Book of *Genesis*; and would also dispose the People to pay more Regard to what he wrote, of those ancient Times, by *pure Revelation*; supposing them to have had such considerable *Memoirs* of them among themselves. But then, further, whatever Obscurity there might be in those Traditions, however their Oppressions might have disturbed their Application to these Studies, toward the latter End of their afflicted Residence in *Egypt*, as in the Days of *Amram*, or Part of *Kobath*; yet these Deficiencies could be perfectly supplied by extraordinary *Revelation*; and the Remains, which they had, would dispose them to entertain respectfully, this more perfect Account.—We may, finally, note, that the common Tradition must be, probably, much worse than in the Family of *Abraham*, both as there would be more Generations, thro' whose Hands the Tradition must descend, and, as these Persons of the *Abrahamic* Family were pious and virtuous Men; as *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, *Joseph*, *Kobath* and *Moses*. A Cotemporary of *Terab*, born in the same Year with him, in the 222d Year after the Flood, would have, in the common Course of



of Nature, supposing him to have a Child in the 30th Year of his Age, successive Generations, as below.

*Terah* born An. Diluv. 222, adding 30 Years.

1st In 30 Years	- -	252d A. Diluv.	<i>Terah</i> had during this
2d In 60	- -	282d	Time, in Descent
3d In 90	- -	312th	from him.
4th In 120	- -	342d	
5th In 150	- -	372d	Generation 1st <i>Abraham</i> .
6th In 180	- -	402d	
7th In 210	- -	432d	
8th In 240	- -	462d	2d <i>Isaac</i> .
9th In 270	- -	492d	
10th In 300	- -	522d	3d <i>Jacob</i> .

*Abraham* was born in the Year after the Flood, 352, *Isaac* in 452, and *Jacob* in 512. Then the 5th Generation would be, as I have noted, about cotemporary with *Abraham*, in the Line of Succession; and the 8th Generation would be about cotemporary with *Isaac*; and the 10th Generation would be about the same with *Jacob*. So that there appears a special over-ruling Plan of Providence, in ordaining these slow Encreases of the *Hebrew* Line, for the maintaining a regular Tradition. Thus *Jacob* was but the 3d in this Line, tho' equal or cotemporary, in the Years of the World, to the 10th Generation, in the ordinary Descents, in other Families. The Tradition was recent in *Abraham's* Hands from *Terah*, when it would be grown obscure, thro' four Generations, in other Families. It was also recent in *Jacob's* Hands, from *Abraham* his Grandfather, when it had past thro' Ten Generations in ordinary Descents, and so would be almost lost in the last Hands, in this long Succession.

## C H A P. XI.

### *On Idolatry, and it's Antiquity.*

I HAVE now brought down Religious Tradition to that Period, when according to the common Course of Things, and the ordinary Fate of Tradition, in all other Cases, it must have declined into great Weakness and Obscurity.—One Thing yet requires Consideration, viz. what Proofs we have of the *actual* Decay of Religious Knowledge, in the early Ages of the *Postdiluvian* World, and how high we can trace the Origin and Beginning of *Idolatry*.—The Uncertainty that remains in this Question, after all the Enquiries



quiries of learned Men, in different Ages and Countries, manifests that the primitive Occasions and Authors of *Idolatry* are difficult to discover; they lie hid in the Clouds and Darkness, which remote Antiquity spreads over them. We have no *Pagan* Memoirs, that go so far back, as to be of any Service to us, in enlightening this Question, any more than the others, which have gone before. So that we must again rely on the Books of the *Old Testament*, as our principal Guide in the historical Way. For clearing this obscure Subject, as well as I am able, I shall offer the following Things to the Reader's Consideration.

## S E C T. I.

*Idolatry very ancient, begun not long after the Flood.*

**I**DOLATRY, or the Worship of false Gods, had an early Introduction into the new World. For it was begun in *Chaldæa*, before the Migration of *Terah* and his Family from thence to *Haran*. And the Time of this Migration may be determined pretty near, by the Circumstances of *Abraham's* Age, at leaving *Haran*, and his Marriage, before he left *Chaldæa*. *Terah* could not leave *Chaldæa*, till the latter Part of his Life. For *Abraham* was born in the 130th Year of *Terah*. And he was married, before he came away. *Gen. xi. 29, 31.* *Terah took Abraham his Son, Lot, his Sons Son, and Sarah his Daughter in Law, his Son Abraham's Wife, and went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees. Abraham* can scarce be supposed to marry, before he was Thirty or Forty Years old, that being as soon as *Sarah's* Age would well admit. And it is remarked that *Sarah* was *barren* at that Time, which implies they had been married some Time before. Let us suppose, then, that this Journey was undertaken, when *Abraham* was about 40, then *Terah* would be about 170, which was the Year of *Serug's* Death.—I acknowledge, it is an amazing Thing that *Idolatry* should prevail in the World, so soon after the *Dispersion*, when the various Nations were so lately withdrawn from the Instruction of *Noah*, who would (doubtless) inculcate on them the most necessary Doctrines of the *Unity* and *Perfections* of God. It seems very *problematical* to explain this Event, and account for the Rise of such an high Absurdity, as *Idolatry* is, in those early Days, almost among the Disciples of the *Patriarchs* themselves; and how it could either be introduced or succeed among those Persons, who must have been so well instructed in the Principles of Religion by *Peleg*, *Reu*, and *Serug* afterwards. So that, methinks, so gross an Innovation in Religion could make no great Progress, till *Serug's* Death; or however till he became so infirm by Years, that he could not any longer inspect the Manners of his Colony, or go about to take Cognizance of their Irregularities.—But, however that be, it is plain from *Josh. xxiv. 2.* That it had then made some Progress.



gress in *Chaldæa*, and seems to have infected *Terah* himself. When the great *Hebrew* General had put an End to their Wars, and had fixed the Boundaries of their Habitations in Peace, he convenes the principal Persons at *Shechem*. Here he, in a solemn Manner, lays before them a Recapitulation of the remarkable Providences, which had attended their Nation, from their first Separation from the other Families of the Earth, to that Day. And he intimates, that one *principal* End of all those extraordinary Providences, was to *separate* them from the *corrupt* Religion that was prevailing in the World; and to maintain the Worship of the true God, when Men were verging so generally to *Idolatry*. *Your Fathers, says he, ver. 2. dwelt in old Time on the other Side of the Flood, and they served other Gods.* So that it was begun, before *Abraham* was warned to withdraw from thence. And that divine Monition might perhaps *reclaim Terah* himself. How speedily the Infection spread, or whether it begun there, cannot (I think) be determined. But it is plain from *ver. 15.* that it had before the Days of *Joshua* dilated thro' almost all Nations. For he enumerates the *Idolatries* of various Countries. There were the Gods of the *Chaldeans*, whom their Fathers served on the other Side the Flood, or *Euphrates*; the Gods of the *Amorites* among whom they dwelt; and the Gods of *Egypt*, from which they had so lately removed. And, tho' there might not, probably, be so great a *Variety* of the *Objects* of Worship, all adoring the *heavenly Bodies*; yet they might serve them under different *Names*, and with Diversity of *Rites*, which might render it very proper to call them the Gods of different Countries.

## S E C T. II.

*Idolatry introduced plausibly and with Caution.*

I THINK it must be allowed, that, when *Idolatry* was first introduced, it must have begun with great Caution, and been proposed with Modesty and Reserve. It was a *new* Thing, and so must have been brought in with the most plausible Pretences, and be represented as very consistent with their original Principles, as scarce any Deviation from them. Such a gross Innovation in *Religion* could hardly have prevailed, unless it had been varnished with a great deal of false Colouring; as probably an avowed honouring the supreme God, by this Medium of his Creatures, or the like. But, as there is no History of the Birth of this *Monster*, we may be allowed Conjecture, where we cannot have Certainty. This, then, might be introduced at first, by some of the younger Families, who lived at some Distance from *Reu*, or *Serug*, who, by that Distance, might not be much in their Familiarity; nor often attend their Sacrifices and publick Devotions. The original Truths might be more imperfectly represented to them, who had them from their own Parents



rents only ; and perhaps never heard *Peleg*, *Reu*, or *Serug*, in the more copious Lectures, which they could give. These might, perhaps, speak almost in the very Words of *Noah*, or *Shem*, which would be more affecting, even when they were not more informing ; and Learners would be apt to attend to them more, and so retain them better, on that account. Now these younger Persons might have the ancient Truths transmitted to them too concisely, or not enforced by so frequent a Repetition ; hence might arise some Misconceptions about the original Truths. Now the conceiving of them wrong would lay a Foundation for more Doubts about them, or Criticisms upon them, than if they had apprehended them right in all Parts. For all wrong Propositions, certainly in the Nature of Things, lay a Foundation for Doubts and Objections, they might thus be led to criticise on the ancient *Traditions* ; and might by speculating, slide into Scepticism or Fanaticism, or Superstition, according to their particular Turn of Mind. In this Situation, they might, in some Degree, lose the genuine and full Notion of the *One* all-perfect Creator and supreme Lord of all Things ; and yet not lose the Notion of superior Beings *above* Mankind. They might, then, begin to turn their Eyes to the glorious, *heavenly Luminaries*, with more Attention and more particular Honour and Veneration than before. They might contemplate the Benefits they sensibly received from their Influences and Operations, or the Calamities which were visibly brought about by their Instrumentality ; such as healthy or fruitful, sickly or unfruitful Seasons.—The *supreme Author* being always invisible, and these glorious Creatures so frequently visible, they might, by little and little, diverge from that religious Reverence which was due to *Him* alone, and gradually lapse into an undue Veneration for *them*. Tho' they were but his own Creatures, yet the first *Idolaters* might be some Way seduced to ascribe too much Glory to them ; because, by their sensible Influence, Operation and Instrumentality, God dispensed so many temporal Gifts and Benefits to the Human Kind. I do not pretend to assign a Reason for *Idolatry*, which is, in itself, most unreasonable. But since the Fact is certain that it obtained early, I am attempting to account for it, how it could possibly prevail so soon after the Dispersion, and the personal Instruction of *Noah*. It was, doubtless, a Matter of Difficulty and Address to introduce this impious Novelty, among Mankind, who were in Possession of a pretty uncorrupted System of *Religious* Truths. The Authors of it must have had something tolerably plausible to plead in it's Behalf. Tho' they could not have a *good* Reason, which was impossible ; yet they must have had some fair Appearance and Semblance of Reason, to seduce Men into so great an Innovation in the *primitive Religion*.—I should think it might, possibly, happen thus ; some vain Man, in his own Family, might first insinuate something of this Novelty, about the subordinate Divinity of the heavenly Bodies to his own Children in the Course of their Education. He might apprehend, and so



represent them as the chief Ministers and Servants of the supreme, invisible God, and so as deserving some Honour, because of the high Rank God had placed them in. The first *Idolater* might point out to his Family, while they surveyed them on high, their singular, lucid Glories, above any other visible Beings. "You do not see my Children, says the first *Idolater*, "the supreme God, who is always invisible; but you see, with your own "Eyes, yonder glorious Luminaries, the Sun, Moon and Stars. These are "his great Servants and Ministers, which He has set over us; which He "has employed to be his own Instruments, for communicating so many "good Things to us. You see, says this first *Apostate*, O my Children, "That we all sensibly partake of the Benefit of their Celestial Influences, "every Day and Hour. Why should we not, then, give them Honour, "as immediately employed in imparting so many signal Benefits to us; and "as being so faithful in their Trust?"

Now these Sentiments about *Sydereal* Gods, as subordinate Ministers of the supreme God, might easily be imposed on Children. For, as they are not very scrupulous about Reasons or Evidence, they would readily embrace any Thing inculcated on their tender Years, by such Authority as that of Parents.

These Children, bred up in the first *Apostate* Family, might at 30 or 40 Years old, be at the Head of Families themselves. What was taught them with *Caution*, they would teach more *boldly* to their Children. For thus it generally is among Mankind, in the Propagation of any new Superstitions, or Errors. Their Senses would administer to the Error, by daily beholding those glorious Beings about them. And this daily Sight of the Sun in his Meridian Splendour, and Nightly View of the Moon and Stars, in their Midnight Beauty and Lustre, would further inspire this superstitious Veneration. And thus the pernicious Work was done, perhaps without Suspicion that there was any great Harm in it. And these Doctrines of Apostacy would come to have the Prejudices of Education in their Behalf, in the first Descent of the *Apostate* Family.—Again; Persons of the same Age and Neighbourhood may be naturally supposed to have frequent Conversation on these new Subjects. People of like Vanity of Mind would be apt to associate; and, if the first Author of *Idolatry* happened to be a Man of some Genius, he might pretend to Refinements on ancient Tradition; and thus Persons of vain Minds might be seduced into the same Errors, by the Love of Novelty and Peculiarity, and an Affectation of being thought wiser than their Forefathers.—St. Paul, *Rom. i. 20 to 24.* 1<sup>st</sup> vs before us a very natural Account of the Origin, as well as Absurdity, of *Idolatry*.—As to the Absurdity of it, he shews, *ver. 20.* That it was not Want of Evidence, as to the Existence of *One true God*, that could afford any Apology for *Idolatry*, for the invisible Things of Him, even his eternal Power and Godhead, were clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made. When they knew God,



God, they glorified Him not as God, but became vain in their Imaginations, or Reasonings. They imagined Things without Foundation, and hereby their foolish Hearts were darkened.—And, I think, the very Manner of their introducing Idolatry is pointed to, ver. 22. *Professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools.* They imagined that the Luminaries of Heaven were God's great Ministers and Servants, and therefore deserved some particular Honours; tho' they might at first only call it subordinate, and that it terminated in ultimate Honour to the supreme Being.—We see new Opinions are always introduced under the Notion of their being some Improvement on those which prevailed before. And those, who broach them, do so far profess themselves wiser. Thus *Infidelity*, as to Revealed Religion, crept into the World, under the Notion of a Reformation of Opinions, and rejecting Credulity, Enthusiasm, or Superstition. Thus also Superstition came in at first, under the Pretence of a commendable, or at least an innocent, Addition to our *Rituals*. Tho' afterwards it put in a Claim to be a necessary one, and so greatly defaced the beautiful Simplicity of our instituted Religion, even in the *Christian Church* itself. These Depravations of *Christianity* are later Events, of which we have very perspicuous Proofs. But as Human Nature is very much similar to itself in all Ages, we may conclude that something parallel to this Behaviour was practised in the first Propagation of *Idolatry*, tho' we have not any direct History of it.

## S E C T. III.

*No good Account of the true Origin of Idolatry, from Pagans.*

WE cannot expect a good Account of the Original of *Idolatry* among *Pagan Writers*. For they did not look upon *Idolatry* to be a false Religion, or any Apostacy from the true ancient Religion, and therefore would never think of explaining it's Original under that Notion; which yet is the only true Notion of it. All, that can be expected from them, is a Description of their *Gods*; the Worship which they severally paid to them; their *Rituals*, *Temples*, *Festivals*, and such like. Indeed, after Objections were made to their Worship, they might attempt to find out Reasons why such Worship should be paid; and why such a Multiplicity of Objects of Worship should be had in Reverence. But there is no Account either of the Objections which were made at first against *Idolatry* when it was in it's Infancy, or of the original Arguments in Justification of it.—We must, therefore, look for the most natural Accounts of the Original of this grand Apostacy, among *Jewish* or *Christian Writers*, who know it to be an Apostacy from the Primitive Religion. In this View *Maimonides*,\* in

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his

\* *Maimon. de Idololatria. Cap. I.*



his Book of *Idolatri*, explains the Original of the first Idolatri in this Manner: "They argued, that since God had created the Stars, and other heavenly Luminaries, for the Government of the World, and had placed them so eminently on high, in such conspicuous View, and admitted them to a certain Participation of Honour, and made use of them, as his Ministers and Servants; therefore we may justly praise and extol them, and ascribe Honour to them. That this is the Will of the Blessed God Himself, that we should magnify and venerate those, whom He has exalted so high, and on whom He has put so much Honour, as Kings would have their chief Ministers had in Honour, which reflects back on themselves."

I cannot but think that the Authority of this celebrated *Rabbi* is preferable to that of any *Pagan* Writer; because he knew that the Sydereal Gods were false Gods; whereas, I question, whether any *Pagan* Writer ever declared them to be false Gods, or unworthy to be Objects of Worship, except the *Atheists*.

"This, says *Maimonides*, [*ibid.* c. 2.] was the Sense of the more intelligent Idolaters, for they never pretended that there was no other God, besides the heavenly Luminaries." But, I acknowledge, I cannot apprehend from whom he could receive this Account. For, if it was from any of his own Contemporaries, those must be studied Answers to the Objections made against *Idolatri* by *Jews* or *Christians*. I should rather suspect, that as this learned *Rabbi* could not have this Account of the Origin of *Idolatri* from any ancient History; he himself made a fortunate Guess, how it might be introduced, since the Fact was so obvious that it had so greatly prevailed; or else some, that he conversed with, might set themselves to study a Reason for ancient *Idolatri*, and fall on this as the most plausible.

#### S E C T. IV.

##### *Idolatri not before the general Dispersion.*

**I**DOLATRY did not, probably, begin before the Flood, nor before the Dispersion. Our learned *Rabbi* lately cited (and most of the *Jewish* Writers) doth, indeed, suppose that this grand Apostacy begun in the Days of *Enoch*. But then they do not found this Opinion upon any pretended, ancient Records of *Paganism*, but upon the Interpretation of that Passage, *Gen. iv. 26. Then begun Men to call on the Name of the Lord*, or as others, *to call themselves by the Name of the Lord*. Some translate *הוֹדוּ* not that they begun to call on God's Name, but they profaned in invoking the Name of God. This is so obscure a Way of expressing it, that one cannot think so clear a Writer as *Moses* would use a Phrase so very difficult to understand.

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The Oriental Critics have variously translated this Text, and Commentators, ancient and modern, have greatly differed in the Interpretation of it; but, as *Dennis Vossius* observes, all, who believed that *Idolatry* began before the Flood, founded their Opinion on this Text. "Thus, says *Maimonides*, in the Days of *Enos*, the Sons of Men fell into a great Error. The Minds of the wise Men of that Generation were so stupified, that even *Enos* himself lapsed into the Infatuation." And then he proceeds to describe the Origin of Sydereal Gods, which I have already quoted. \* *Ainsworth* is large in stating this *Rabbinical* Opinion. † Our great *Selden*, ‡ *Vandale*, and many other learned Men embrace the same Opinion, which however is rejected by many other eminent Writers.

It appears not probable to me, on examining all I could meet with, on both Sides of this Question, that this Text intimates any Beginning of Idolatry at that Time.

1. This Text cannot mean that Men first began to be religious at that Time; for *Enos* was born 105 Years after *Abel's* Sacrifice, which had been so signally owned of God.

Again; it cannot mean that Men at that Time began to call *not on the Name of Jehovah*; for it expressly says, that in some Sense or other, they then began to call on that Name. This would not be a natural Manner of relating the Origin of Idolatry, to express it thus: Then begun Men to call on the Name of the Lord, if it means that they then began to call on the Names of *Baal*, *Moloch*, or the like.

*Moses*, who is the most natural, clear Writer, would not choose such obscure, ambiguous Terms; therefore they must mean something, which the Words naturally express, either that they then first began to be religious, which cannot be, as I have proved by *Abel's* Case, or which seems to be the most natural Sense of the Words.

2. Then begun Men to call on the Name of the Lord, or to call themselves by the Name of the Lord; then did the Posterity of *Seth*, or all pious Men, begin to distinguish themselves from the Posterity of *Cain*, or all loose Men of any Line, by calling themselves by the Name of the Lord; not in Opposition to the Name of any false God; but more openly avowing their Piety, or faithful Adherence to true Religion, amidst the growing Profaneness of the other House and their Adherents. *Aquila* translated it to this Sense, which *Le Clerc* follows. And it is plain, in the Progress of the History, that there actually was a Distinction betwixt the Sons of God and the Sons of Men, which cannot well be taken in any other Sense, *Gen.* vi. 2. and which perhaps about this Time was more manifest, by their engaging in Publick Worship, in a larger Sense than before.

3. It

\* *Ainsw. in Loc.*

† *De Diis Syris Proleg. c. 3.*

‡ *De Origin. Idol. p. 14.*



3. It is highly improbable that there could be a Worship of any of the Creatures, while *Adam* was among them. § For he could clearly explain the Original of the heavenly Luminaries, as he had punctually received it in the History of the Creation. He knew that *God said, Let there be Light, and it was so*; that He made the greater *Light* to rule the Day, and the lesser *Light* to rule the Night, and He made the Stars also, *i. e.* instrumentally to furnish the Conveniencies of Day and Night, and Seasons; as the Earth did administer to our Wants by its Fruits. He could clearly inform them, that they were created Bodies, like the Earth. He, from heavenly Instruction, could unanswerably reply to such senseless Abominations, that they should pray to an *enlightened* Clod, any more than to a *dark* one; or to Sulphur or a Candle, any more than to a Stone, or a Lump of Earth that was not luminous.

4. *Cain* himself had frequent Communication with God, in a supernatural Way. He was, by a Voice from Heaven, or from the *Shechinah*, rebuked for *Abel's* Murder, *Gen. iv. 9.* And then again, when he was assured of *God's* protecting him from any Human Hand that should revenge that Murder, which I take to be the Meaning of that Sign, which God gave to *Cain*, called the Mark which He set upon him, *Gen. iv. 14, 15.*

5. It is very difficult to account for it, how they should, under such clear Instructions, as *Adam* could give them, concerning the Original of Things, as he had them from Revelation, fall into the *Worship* of their Fellow Creatures, which were all created by One God; and only differed from each other, by different material Properties, as luminous or dark, hard or soft, spherical or angular, in apparent Rest or Motion, and such like. What supposed Benefit could they have thereby?

It may be easily explained, by the Course of Human Passions, how they might become vicious in their Manners, tho' they had a great deal of Knowledge. They might fall into Luxury, Lasciviousness, and other Sensualities, by the strong Impulse of natural Appetites; they might become violent, or oppressive, out of Avarice or Pride. The Impetuosity of animal Appetites and Passions might enslave and overwhelm Reason. But I cannot discern what Appetite or Passion was indulged, by their supposing that the Sun or Moon were Gods; or what they had gained by it, in Favour of their Lusts, by deifying every Star in the Firmament. So that it is much easier to account for their being bad Men, through the Instigation of their Passions, than their worshipping Creatures, which doth not appear to have had any such Incentive to it at first, while the Notion of God was sufficiently clear.

6. Had *Idolatry* obtained in the *Antediluvian* World, one would think it must have been mentioned by *Moses*, among the other Enormities, which  
procured

§ Non vivo Adamo, Idololatriam coepisse, quicquid de illo Ævo narret mendax Rabbino-  
rum Natio, verisimile est. *Clerc. in Loc.*



procured that dreadful Judgment of the *Flood*, either *before* or *after* it. But there is a profound Silence on this Subject. There is an ample Account of their licentious Love, and all the Enormities of unbridled Lasciviousness, and promiscuous, lawless Lusts, *Gen. vi. 2.* There is a clear Account of their Pride, Cruelty, and Violence; for the Earth was filled with it. It was the boundless Latitude of the old World, in all Immoralities, which ruined it, according to *Moses, Gen. vi. 12, 13.* It may be further observed, that upon the Replantation of the World, by *Noah's* Family, there is no Prohibition of *Idolatry*, nor any Censure of the old World for that Crime. Tho' there are Laws about Property and Life, strong Monitions against Violence, Oppression and Murder, and against the very Approaches to Cruelty, in the Prohibition of *Blood*; yet there is not the least Warning against *Idolatry* in any Branch of it *then*, any more than any Censure of it before.

Our learned *Ainsworth* thinks indeed that *Idolatry* was referred to, under the Word *Corruption*, in which he chiefly follows the *Rabbins*. But, if we consider the Connection in *Moses*, betwixt the Crimes mentioned, and the denouncing this great Judgment against them, it may induce us to think that their gross Immoralities were here meant by the general Name of *Corruption*, as is common in all *Ethic* Writers. The Deluge is first denounced after the Relation of their exorbitant Lusts, *Gen. vi. 3.* when *the Sons of God*, or those of a more religious Education, promiscuously chose the *Daughters of Men*, without Regard to their Character, however impiously brought up, then the first Intimation was given of the Flood, 120 Years before it came. The Historian then adds a further Account of their general Wickedness, *ver. 5.* that there was a boundless Proclivity to Vice, they were prone to all Machinations of Iniquity; yet here is no Hint of their false Gods.—The second Mention of the Flood is in *ver. 13.* where the Reason given for this Divine Resolve of Vengeance, is, that the Earth was *filled with Violence*; which is twice repeated, along with the *Corruption* of their whole Ways, or general Pravity of Manners. Now the *Crimes*, which are plainly named, in the closest Connection with the *Threatening*, seem to be the Causes of that Judgment, rather than *those* which are not distinctly named at all. This is further intimated in the Account of the *Nephilim* Giants. This Name is by the *Hebrew Critics* derived from the Verb נָפַל *Naphal*, *cadere*, to fall, or *irruere*, to fall upon. *Ainsworth*, according to the first Sense, calls them *Apostates*, or *fallen* from God. But, if we consider the Characters of these *Nephilim*, which the *Septuagint* translates *Giants*, that they were *mighty Men*, and of great Name or *Renown* of old, it would incline one to think, that they were Persons of great Strength and Stature, who *fell with Violence* on all about them, as great and victorious Oppressors; and were hereby formidable in a great, tho' wicked, Reputation.\*

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\* Vid. *Le Cler. in Loc.*



These Arguments make it probable, that there was no Idolatry before the Flood. And sure it cannot be reasonable to build so much upon a Word of uncertain Signification, whose Sense must at least be owned to be dubious, as in *Gen. iv. 26*. And it could not, methinks, obtain, till after the Dispersion, when the Nations were removed far from the Inspection and Animadversion of *Noah, Shem*, and the other Elder Patriarchs. But it might, in 100 Years after, begin to work on some, whose Senses led them to honour the greatest visible Things they saw; and who had not so perfect an Instruction in the Nature of Things invisible.

## CHAP. XII.

### *On the Kinds of Ancient Idolatry.*

**I**NOW proceed to consider the Species of Idolatry, or false Worship, which successively prevailed in the World. And it is by most Authors supposed to begin with worshipping the Host of Heaven, or the Sydereal Gods.

## SECT. I.

### *On the Worship of the Heavenly Bodies, or Sydereal Gods.*

**T**HEY begun to worship the Host of Heaven, which, as I have observed, was the first Species of Idolatry. 1. They must soon apprehend that their Prayers and Praises could be heard by the Gods, to whom they addressed them. That is, they must soon have such a Perswasion in their own Minds. And this Notion, essential to all intelligent Worship, must (I think) first come in from their apprehending the heavenly Luminaries to be the Servants and Ministers of the supreme God, as I also noted.

2. When they considered them as his Ministers, they would soon conceive of them as animated Beings, who had an Intelligence, or Principle of Consciousness, put into them; as the Human Body has, seated in it, a Human Soul. They would be very like to imagine that they guided their own Motions, by a thinking, reasonable Principle in themselves, and that they performed all their Ethereal Journeys by Understanding and Concurrence of their own Will.

3. And, when once they apprehended them to be Intelligences, they might easily imagine them to be *noble* Intelligences. From the *Extent* of their Ethereal Journeys thro' so large a Space, they might conceive them capable of making *large* Observations, and of seeing as far as they are seen.

From



From the *Velocity* and *Regularity* of their Motions, the perpetual Order, Exactness and Usefulness of all of them, they would conceive of them an high Opinion as to their Diligence and *Faithfulness*. They would be apt to conclude, that, if they thought *at all*, they certainly thought very *nobly*. That they had *exalted* Powers of Reason and Virtue, to conduct them thro' all their wondrous, useful Course; and this with so much uniform Steadiness, as never to be seduced to remit even for one Day, or to deviate from their Path; in which they successively carried Light, and Heat, and Seasons, to all the World. Hence they might be esteemed *good*, as well as *great* Beings, very wise, and very benevolent, fitted by the supreme Creator for the noble Work they had to execute.

4. Thus at first, while the Notion of the One true God, as the Creator of all Things, remained, they might entertain this *subordinate* Honour for *them*, while they had a *supreme* Honour for *Him*. And this probably was the more plausible *first* Idolatry; but which afterwards swelled and dilated to that enormous System of Impiety and Absurdity, which so long prevailed, the Infamy and Disgrace of the politest Ages.

5. If it should be thought incredible to any Reader, that Mankind should ever fall into such absurd Imaginations; we shall prove, from ancient and modern Testimonies, that they have actually done so, in later Times, and therefore that they might do so, soon after the Dispersion.

I shall begin with some Observations of the very learned Dr. *Campbell*,\* Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of *St. Andrews*, in his excellent Book of the *Necessity of Revelation*: "Let us imagine two or more  
" Men, at their first Appearance on Earth, without any Stock of Ideas,  
" having only their bare Powers, to *apprehend*, *judge* and *infer*; with respect  
" to acquiring Knowledge, given up to shift for themselves. Now setting  
" a Man in these Circumstances, we are easily led to apprehend that, as  
" he is conscious that all his *own* Motions come from an inward Life or  
" Power, and are wholly at his own Disposal; so he will certainly judge  
" the same concerning *all other* Things in Motion, whose Motions  
" he doth not perceive to arise from some external Cause, or Impulse."  
Thus he will naturally conclude, that the several Individuals of his own Species, the Beasts of the Field, and Fowls of the Air, are all of them living Beings. And he adds, "Beyond all doubt, he will conceive the heavenly Bodies to be all animated, and that, by an inward Life and Power, they perform all their Motions."—Now, tho' I suppose the first Authors of *Idolatry* much better instructed, than the *learned Professor* had Occasion to allow in his Argument; yet, on our Supposition, that they apprehended them to be God's Ministers and Servants, they would be very like to fall into the Opinion, that they were not only Animals, but Intelligences. And it is plain, from all the Monuments of profane Antiquity, that they did so.

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\* *Necess. Revelat.* p. 183.



—It seems, indeed, plain that God himself, in the *Mosaical Law*, intimates this Original of *Sydereal Idolatry*, *Deut. iv. 19.* “Take you good heed unto yourselves—Lest thou lift up thine Eyes unto the Heavens, and, when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all the Host of Heaven, shouldest be *driven to worship them* and serve them, which the Lord thy God *bath divided unto all the Nations*, under the whole Heaven.” God himself here intimates, that, by observing the Beauty and Order, and Benefits of those glorious Creatures, they were in Danger of falling into the Opinion that was then common, that they were, in some Sense, the Givers of those Benefits, and the Authors of that Order. And that hereby they might be *driven to worship them*, or *seduced* by that *plausible* Opinion, into this Service of them. Not considering, as they ought, that God had divided, or imparted them for the Use of all the Earth, as inanimate, unconscious, mechanic Instruments of conveying Light, Heat, and prolific Influences to the Earth; which was as much active in sending the vegete Juices thro’ the Vessels of the Plant, as they were in diffusing their Rays upon it’s Surface. And we may justly say, that the Ocean and the Earth exercised as much Reason and conscious Design, in sending up Vapours and vegetable Juices, as the Sun did in sending forth that prolific Heat, by which they are raised.—And further, if we embrace the new *Physiology*, then the Earth which moves with a double Motion, the diurnal one round it’s own Axis, and the annual one in it’s own proper Orbit, will be more active, and have greater Pretensions to Divinity, than the Sun or the fixed Stars, which rest and slumber at the Centre of their several Systems.

And this Account, which *Moses* gives of God’s *dividing* the Earth among it’s Inhabitants, and leaving the Sun, and Moon, and Stars *common* to all; or, in the other Sense, *dividing* or *imparting* the Influences of the Stars to all, as his Instruments for bringing about mechanically whatever good Effects He created them to produce; this Account of God’s working by the heavenly Bodies, as material, unintelligent Causes, is much more *philosophical*, than any of the most sagacious Philosophers ever taught, concerning God and his Works; or than any of the *Pagan* Historians have collected from their popular Traditions. That curious and industrious Collector, *Diodorus of Sicily*,\* lays down historically the Origin of *Pagan Worship* thus: “The most ancient Inhabitants of *Egypt* looking up to the World above them, and contemplating *την τῶν ὀλῶν φύσιν*, the universal Nature, and being struck with Admiration, supposed the Sun and Moon to be the first Gods. And called the Sun *Osiris*, and the Moon *Isis*.”

6. But this is not (I think) the plausible, first Idolatry, which *Diodorus* here describes, *which* supposed even the Sun and Moon to be only subordinate Deities; *this* is the more gross Creed of the intermediate Ages; but which could not have prevailed even in the latter Part of *Terah’s* Life. For then

\* *Diodor. Sic. Bibliothec. Lib. 1.*



then every body knew the supreme Creator, by genuine, Catholic Tradition; and that the heavenly Luminaries were, at most, but his greater Servants and Ministers, by whose Hands He imparted his Benefits to all the World. But then, if they conceived them to be his Servants, they might imagine them to be active, faithful, good Servants; who, for that Reason, might deserve a Share of subordinate Honour; or, as *Moses* expresses it, *might be driven to worship them*.—*Lactantius* points to the same Thing, perhaps, in Part referring to this Account of *Diodorus Siculus*. \* “When in Egypt, on Account of the Deliciousness of the Country, they stayed not so much within their Houses, but spent whole Nights for sleeping in the open Air, where their serene Sky was liable to no unwholesome, noxious Vapours. They, from this frequent Survey of the Aspects of the heavenly Bodies, and their Proceßion by constant Laws, fell into the Opinion that the Stars were Gods, and Conservators of the Universe; whom they worshipped with various Rites and Ceremonies.”

7. But this was not only the Opinion of the common People, but afterwards, when Learning and Science more abounded, it was espoused by the most celebrated *Philosophers*. It is no Wonder that the vulgar Herd of *Pagans* might insensibly decline from that more cautious and plausible Idolatry, which at first prevailed, and sink into all those Absurdities, which gradually took place in the ensuing Ages of *Barbarism*. But that their greatest Men, in the politest Ages, should be still entangled with this Error of Sydereal Deities, and animated and rational Stars, is the greatest Matter of Admiration.—*Thales*, the Head of the *Ionick* School, *Empedocles*, and many others, attributed Life to several Things on this Earth, which every one knows to be inanimate, such as the Loadstone, all Plants and Vegetables; and therefore, as *Dr. Campbell* argues, they must have held that the Stars were animated. † But, in Multitudes of Instances of the great Ancients, this Point is undeniable, as to the Animation of the heavenly Bodies being their full Opinion. *Diogenes Laertius*, ‡ who collects so many Particulars of the ancient *Dogmata* of the most celebrated *Philosophers*, expressly says, that *Pythagoras*, the famous Master of the *Italic* School, held, “that the Sun, Moon and Stars are Gods.” And tho’ the Reasons for the Opinion are very inconclusive, yet they plainly shew what Opinion he would have proved. “The Air, says he, about the Earth being motionless, is noxious, and breeds Diseases, and all Things in it are mortal; but that, which is above the Earth, being always in Motion, is pure and healthful, and all Things in it are immortal, and consequently *divine*.”—The same Sentiment frequently occurs in *Plato*. “We ought, says he, to look on the heavenly Bodies as so many Animals. And, indeed, the Stars are all of a Divine Nature, having each of them a most beautiful Body, and a

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“ most

\* *De Origine Error*. Lib. 2. c. 24. p. 583. Edit. Step.

† Pag. 192.

‡ *Diog. Laert. Pythag.*



" most happy and excellent Mind. As for Things, whose Motions are ir-  
 " regular, they are destitute of Judgment and Understanding; but the hea-  
 " venly Bodies being always steady and uniform in their Motions, hereby  
 " manifest that they are *wise and intelligent Beings*." \* And it appears to have  
 been *Plato's* settled Persuasion, as he often mentions it; especially in that  
 remarkable Passage: † " It is impious and highly displeasing to the Stars,  
 " particularly to those great Gods, the Sun and Moon, to say that their  
 " Motions are irregular." Whatever was *Aristotle's* Opinion, as to the Di-  
 vinity of the Stars, yet he was as clear as the rest, as to their being animated,  
 when he, as *Dr. Campbell* cites him, interposes this Caution against the Doc-  
 trine of *Anaxagoras*. We conceive of the Stars, as if they were mere life-  
 less Bodies, only ranged in a certain Order; but they are living, active  
 Beings.—*Zeno* also affirming, as quoted by the same learned Writer, " that  
 " the Sun, Moon and Stars are, each of them, an *intelligent and wise* lucid  
 " Fire." We have the same Sentiments copiously urged by *Tully*, in his  
 Book, *De Naturâ Deorum*, Lib. 2. " For as much, says *Balbus*, his *Stoic*  
 " *Philosopher*, as the Heat of the Sun is like that Heat, which is in the  
 " Bodies of Animals, it must be allowed, that the Sun and the other Stars  
 " are Animals. And, as they arise from that celestial Ardor, or Warmth,  
 " which is called *Æther*, they must be more excellent in their Nature,  
 " than those, which are generated from Earth, Air, and Water." And he  
 adds, that " it is highly probable that those heavenly Beings have a *fine*  
 " and *excellent Understanding*, since they inhabit in that pure *Æther*, and  
 " are nourished by those Vapours from the Earth and Seas, which must  
 " be greatly refined and purified, before they ascend to their Height.—  
 " Again; the steady Order and Regularity of their Motions is a full Proof  
 " of their *Sense and Understanding*." — And, in the Close of the Argu-  
 ment, he adds, agreeable to what we cited from *Plato* before, " He, who  
 " observes thus much, acts not only ignorantly, but impiously, if he de-  
 " nies that they are Gods." — *Professor Campbell* § quotes *Galen* for the same  
 Opinion. He observes, " That, tho' *Galen* professes a deep Sense of the  
 " Goodness, Wisdom and Power of a forming Mind; yet he expressly de-  
 " clares, that, as a Survey of the Heavens will lead us to an Admiration of  
 " the Beauty of those Bodies, the Sun, Moon and Stars, so it is reasonable  
 " to think, that, by how much the Substance of those Bodies is purer, by  
 " so much the Mind, which animates them, is better and more perfect.  
 " If you attend, says he, *Plato*, *Aristotle*, *Hipparchus*, *Archimedes*, &c. you  
 " will observe a rational Nature in Men themselves, then how great must  
 " the Excellency of that Mind be, which is in the Sun, Moon, and other  
 " Stars!" And he adds, in another Place, " The Stars are equally resplen-  
 " dent and dry; and are, therefore, endued with the highest Intelligence.  
 " And whoever denies it, seems to have no Sense, and to be wholly ig-  
 " norant

\* Vid. *Campb. Nec. Revel.* p. 193.† *Plat. de Legib.* Lib. 7.§ *Neces. Rev.* p. 196.



“norant of the Excellency of the Gods.” This Sentiment is the more surprising, as *Galen* lived so long after *Christianity* was introduced, flourishing in the Reigns of *Adrian* and *Antoninus Pius*. But we find, that the later *Platonists*, even after *Christianity* had diffused so great Light, as to put them upon inventing the most plausible Accounts of *Paganism*, that they were able, and after rejecting many of the Absurdities of the vulgar *Creeds*, yet still retained the Doctrine of the Deity of the heavenly Bodies, and that a religious Veneration was due to them.—*Plotinus* argues thus: “It cannot be thought that the Stars, which are in the inferior Spheres, or those, which shine in the highest Orbs, are not Gods, since they proceed in the greatest Regularity and Order, and with the greatest Harmony and Beauty.” \* The same Author still more strongly expresses himself thus: “After we have ascribed Memory to the Stars, we justly ascribe also to them Senses, not only Seeing, but Hearing. And we grant that those Prayers, which we address to the Sun, we may expect *can be heard*, as others expect the like as to their Prayers to other Stars; for they believe that, by their Prayers, they shall obtain many Benefits from them.” † This *Dogma* of living, intelligent Stars seems to have been a Sort of sacred Principle of their popular *Theology*, revered by the State and Populace, as well as the *Philosophers*. The Account which *Diogenes Laertius* gives of the Proceedings of the Magistrates and People of *Athens*, against *Anaxagoras*, for maintaining that the Sun was only a Stone set on Fire, so that he was convicted of Impiety upon a solemn Trial for that Opinion; his Account (I say) shews that it was the popular *Theology*, that the Stars were animated Intelligences.

The learned Dr. *Campbell* proves at large, that some, both *Jews* and *Christians*, have embraced this Opinion. Dr. *Cudworth* cites this famous Passage from *Maimonides*; § “The Stars and Spheres are every one of them animated and endued with Life, Knowledge and Understanding; and they acknowledge Him, who commanded, and the World was made; every one, according to their Degree and Excellency, praising and honouring Him, as the Angels do.” And, indeed, I suspect that this being his own Opinion, might put him on that Scent, as to the Original of *Idolatry* before named. *Ainsworth* ‡ quotes the same Sentiment much more copiously. *Gerhard Vossius*, in his learned and laborious Work of *the Origin of Idolatry*, || gives a large Account not only of the Notions of *Paganism*, on this Point, but of several *Jews* and *Christians* adhering to it. He mentions *Origen* as very much favouring this, to which Dr. *Campbell* adds other Testimonies, from his Book against *Celsus*: *Tycho Brahe* declares for this Notion, which he chiefly ascribes to the *Platonists*.

Thus

\* *Plotin. Ennead. 2. Lib. 9.*

† *Plotin. Ennead. 4. Lib. 4.*

§ *Intellect. System, p. 47 l.*

‡ *Ainsworth on Gen. iv.*

|| *Lib. II. Cap. 30.*



Thus I have attempted to explain this first Branch of ancient *Idolatry*, the worshipping the Aërial Gods, or the Host of Heaven. All Authors seem to agree that this was the first Worship in the Apostate Churches of *Paganism*, and these the *first Gods* of all Nations. Heathen Writers thought it to be the first, and that it ought to be so, and that it was the original Worship, having lost the original Tradition long before any Writer flourished, who has reached our Days. And *Jewish* and *Christian* Writers, who know it to be an Apostacy from a primitive true Religion, yet own it to be the first Species of *Idolatry*, or false Worship.

## S E C T. II.

*On the Worship of spiritual and invisible Beings.*

I SHALL next enquire into the Original and Antiquity of *Pagan* Worship, as to the Objects of their Adoration, which were of a spiritual and invisible Nature.—Two of the most eminent Writers of the last Age, our great *Selden*, and the learned *Gerhard Vossius*, set themselves to the Support of this Opinion, that the Worship of incorporeal, spiritual Beings was very ancient in *Paganism*. *Selden*, *de Diis Syris*, cap. 3. *Prolegom.* observes, “ that there were two principal Branches of their corrupt *Theology*, (*first*) “ the Worship of Things *corporeal*, as the *Sun* and *Moon*, and the rest of “ the *heavenly Host*. (*Secondly*) Of Things *incorporeal*, as *Demons*, or spiritual “ Beings, which were reputed to be *Gods*. From which two Sources arose “ all the System of Superstition, which nugacious and impious Posterity “ introduced into *Religion*.” *Vossius*, in his laborious Work *de Idololatria*, *Lib. 1. cap. 5.* says, “ My Opinion is, that Angels were worshipped before “ the Souls of Men, and Evil Spirits, which we call, by Way of Emi- “ nence, *Satan*, before good Spirits.” But, I think, the Instances, he produces, are too recent, to prove that this Species of *Idolatry* was so very early, as our learned Author supposes. He, indeed, refers to the Opinion of two Principles the Good and the Evil, as the Opinion of *Zoroastres*; but there is so much Uncertainty as to the Time of this Eastern Sage, that there can be little inferred from his having taught it, as to the Antiquity of this Opinion. And, tho’ he cites *Plutarch de Isid. et Osiride*, to prove it to have been an ancient Opinion that there was a good and an evil Principle, both in *Persia* and in *Egypt*, the one revered as the Author of all Good, and the other worshipped out of Fear, as the Author of Evil; yet *Plutarch* brings no very ancient Testimonies, that will carry the Point high enough to decide the Question, about the Antiquity of the Worship of an evil, spiritual Being. But, for the clearing this Subject as well as I am able, I shall



I shall endeavour to explain the Original of the Notion of invisible, spiritual Beings, as far as it can be gathered from the Writings of *Moses*.

1. By the History, which *Moses* gives us of the Creation of Man, it appears that there was something equivalent to a *Conference*, or a *Speaking to others* of the great Design, which the Almighty Creator was then going to execute. *God said, Let us make Man in our Image.* He, in this History, is represented as imparting to *some Auditors*, his Design of completing the great Work, with the Creation of Man; who should partake more of the Divine Image than any other of the Divine Works before enumerated, *Gen. i. 26.* and afterwards it is related, that He made him in that Divine Image, which the Holy Angels might be in Part Partakers of. Now this would give *Adam* some Notion of *Numbers*, to whom the Creator spoke, as *Witnesses* of the wonderful Work. He was the great Architect of the whole Fabric, and of all its Furniture; but He represents Himself as communicating this greatest Design to the adoring *Witnesses* of his Work, who themselves were dignified with a Portion of his Image.—When he heard this History, *Let us make Man*, he could conceive nothing of the *two Divine Persons*, the Son and Holy Spirit, but he could conceive of some *Beings* spoken to, as *Witnesses*, tho' not as *Coadjutors*. For it is plain that all that is recorded in the *Mosaic* History, of the Creation, is set forth as the Act of One supreme Being. *God made all Things. God said, Let there be Light*, and it was so, by the Energy of *his* Power. Therefore his glorious *Ministers* were to be apprehended *different* from their glorious *Master* and Lord.

2. It is, I think, almost an universal Opinion, that there was a glorious Presence, or Appearance, to our first Parents, called by the *Rabbins* the *Shechinah*, which was observable by them, in all the Transactions, which they were concerned in; such as the *bringing ADAM* into Paradise, *proclaiming* the Law of the forbidden Fruit, *judging* him after his Fall, and *pronouncing* the judicial Sentence on all the Transgressors. There was a celestial Train, which attended the Presence, and which (probably) did not appear in an *indistinct*, luminous Vision; but, as I may say, with *distinct* personal Form, distinguishable from one another, so that *Adam* could perceive there were more than one of these heavenly Ministers.

3. If this Notion of the *Shechinah* should be thought precarious, so that some should question whether there was any such glorious Appearance of the heavenly Armies, in any Distinction of *Numbers*, attendant on the Presence, yet, when Man was expelled from *Paradise*, this Distinction would become manifest. *Gen. iii. 22, 23, 24.* The LORD GOD said, The Man is become as *one of us*, knowing Good and Evil;—so He drove out the Man—and HE PLACED at the East of the Garden of *Eden*, CHERUBIM and a flaming Sword, to keep the Way of the Tree of Life. Now these *Che- rubim* were certainly distinct from *Him*, who placed *them* there.—*Adam*, therefore,



therefore, must, at least after his Fall, and after this Transaction, know that the Lord God had his heavenly Ministers and Servants of his Will, who executed his sovereign Orders of Wisdom, with unspeakable Alacrity. He knew that He, who stationed these celestial Guards, was a distinct Being from those obsequious Ministers, who executed his supreme Behests.

4. As they had a clear Notion of the Existence of *good* Spirits, or incorporeal Intelligences, far nobler than themselves, which were the Courtiers of the Eternal King; so, after the Fall at least, they might have a Notion of *evil* Beings of a spiritual and incorporeal Nature, with Powers greatly exceeding their own. For they had Experience that the *Serpent* was possessed of great *Sagacity*, that he had made use of a very masterly *Artifice* to seduce them, and had made use of human Speech, as well as Reason, to give his Temptation the most cogent as well as plausible Appearance; he had suggested, that they should not die, tho' they sinned, *i. e.* eat the Fruit, and that they should be Gainers by the Adventure, in the Enlargement of their Knowledge. Now they would soon come to know, by Observation, that the *Serpent* was no more than a *Brute*; that it could *not* talk, or *reason*, any more than other Animals; that it *never afterwards* enjoyed those distinguishing Marks of Superiority, which at that Time appeared; and therefore, they must naturally conclude, that, in that extraordinary Period, it was acted by some higher, spiritual Being, of a Nature more exalted than it's own, or theirs either. For they knew that *they* had not Power to inspire a Brute Animal with Sense and Reason, and Speech. Now hereby our first Parents would learn, that there were spiritual Beings as much superior to Man, as he was superior to the lower Creation. And also, that there were some of those Beings, tho' of so exalted a Nature, which were wicked and malignant Enemies to God and Men. They knew that there were some Creatures, over whom they had a Grant of *Dominion*; but that there was a superior Order of Intelligences, distinct from themselves and the Brute Creation too, over which they had *no Authority*, and with which they ought not to concert Friendships. Thus, I apprehend, the Knowledge of invisible, spiritual Beings would easily be introduced into the World. And that there were some of a good, and some of a bad Nature; all, indeed, infinitely less than God, and yet superior to themselves, and as distinct from God, as they themselves were. This Knowledge *Adam* could communicate to his growing Progeny; and, as he lived so long, *Methuselah* could have it from him, and impart it to *Noah*, who could transmit it to the World, at the *general Dispersion*.—Again; the Notion of *good* Angels would be farther propagated by the many Appearances of Angels, and their Intercourses with Mankind by Divine *Command*. Thus *Abraham* could impart this Knowledge, with a new Confirmation, by the Correspondence with heavenly Beings, with which himself was frequently favoured, *Gen. xviii.* The *Moa-bites* and *Ammonites* would have a Confirmation of the Doctrine of good Angels



Angels being ministring Spirits, and this to execute either Judgment or Mercy, from their great Ancestor, *Lot*; who could relate the Coming of the Angels, his own Preservation, and the Destruction of *Sodom*, of his own Knowledge. The *Arabs* would have a parallel Confirmation from the Experience of *Hagar* and *Ishmael*, *Gen. xvi.* And the historical Part of the Book of *Job* intimates, that the Notion of good and bad Spirits was familiar to the ancient World. That these spiritual Beings were admitted, as Courtiers, into the Presence of the Eternal King of the Universe; and that, as great Monarchs conversed with their Courtiers and Generals, they had a Sort of heavenly Correspondence with Him. And also that great Beings, tho' Rebels, might sometimes be admitted, tho' always in Character, as infinitely below God, *Job i.*

5. According to *Moses's* History, all their Notions of God were, that He was absolutely supreme, with regard to all other Beings, visible or invisible; not only over the material and animal World, which He governed by mechanic Laws, but over all the spiritual World too. The good Angels are ever represented as his Attendants and heavenly Ministers; and the bad as absolutely under his Controul, cognizable before Him for all their Actions, and liable to his irresistible Sentence for any Enormities which they commit, or any Disorders they endeavour to introduce into his orderly World. So that the original Notions which Mankind could have, even of the World of Spirits, were very just. There was not one Fact, which God suffered to happen, which could lay a Foundation for early *Atheism*, or for any impious and profane Sentiments, for any Heresies, or grand Errors in Religion, in the primitive World, or any thing like two Principles. And, from all this, it seems plain to me, that there was no Manner of Foundation laid for this Species of *Idolatry*, the worshipping either good or bad Spirits. *Vossius*, doubtless, very justly observes, that this Absurdity was produced by two great Causes, Corruption of Tradition, and ensuing to that, a Corruption of Reason. They argued, says our great Author, "That, as there is in all Nature, both Good and Evil, in Plants and Animals, there are the wholesome Fruits and the malignant Poisons, the Asp and Basilisk, as well as the useful Sheep or Cow; so there are the Pestilence, Famine and Storms, as well as fruitful, healthful and placid Seasons in Nature. Here depraved Reason concluded, that both could not proceed from the same Parent of Good; and therefore they came to assign two Principles, one of Good, the other of Evil."

But (*Sixthly*) it is to be noted, that all the Authors, who have wrote on this Subject, are so much later than *Moses*, that we cannot gather any proper Information from them, as to the Antiquity of *Demon Worship*. And, as to this Point, I think that it is very dubious whether he speaks any thing of it, or not. It is very plain, that the World might have a Notion of an Order of invisible, spiritual Beings, and that there were Spirits both good and



and bad. But then their original Notions were so clear, that both the good and the bad Spirits were under the absolute Command and Controul of God, that it seems not probable, that they could degenerate into the Worship of either of them, till they had left off, in a great measure, if not wholly, the Worship of the supreme Deity.

7. They would, as I apprehend, be liable first to lapse into the Notion of inferior Gods, which were *not bad*, and so might come, in the later Ages of Superstition, to have, as from among the good Angels, their Gods of an inferior Order, marine or terrestrial, as well as aerial. Hence might gradually spring up the amusing Fables of the Nymphs and Fauns, the rural and sylvan, the mountain and fountain Deities, which were a Sort of Beings, that were thought to reside in those Retirements, and to have a kind of peculiar Dominion over them, as well as delight in them.—But I conceive, that these *Ineptiæ*, which might be called almost *innocent* Fooleries, compared with some other Things, made up the System of later *Paganism*, of which there are no Traces in the *Mosaic* Accounts of *Idolatry*. There is no Hint of the Nymphs of *Jordan*, or the *Nile*, or any of the sylvan Deities, which sported on the Top of *Carmel*, or any other of the rural Retreats of the ancient *Canaan*. Whenever Men happened to have any of the spiritual Interviews, they were always with *Angels*. And it may, I think, be questioned whether they worshipped *bad* Beings, under that Notion, so early.

8. There are, indeed, some Passages in the *Mosaic* Writings, which, according to several Translations, may be thought to intimate, that the Worship of the Devil had prevailed, as *Levit. xvii. 7.* and they shall *no more* offer their Sacrifices unto *Devils*. But then the Word here made use of, is שְׂבִירִים *Schabirim*, which is also the *Hebrew* Word for *Goats*, or a general Word for coarse, hairy Animals. By this Passage it appears, they had, before this Time, sacrificed to *Schabirim*; and, as this is meant of the *Idolatry*, which they had fallen into in *Egypt*,\* it seems the most probable that they had, before the Egression, consecrated a *Goat*, as well as a *Cow* or *Bull*, and had worshipped the Image of that Animal. So it may be conjectured, that the *Goat*, as an Emblem of Fecundity, was consecrated either to the Sun or Moon, and might be, from the same Original with the Worship of *Priapus*, in the later Times of *Greece* or *Rome*, and Kindred to the impure Solemnities of *Baal-Peor*. For that, being a salacious Animal, might be thought a proper Emblem of the Sun, as the great Fountain of prolific Influences. There might be something particularly *detestable* in these Sacrifices, and the Rites which attended them, when they honoured an Animal, which they took to be an apt Emblem of Generation, *Numb. xxv. 1, 2.* But how they should imagine a *Goat* to be a more proper Emblem, or Representation, of the *Devil*, than a *Bull* or *Cow*, seems to me wholly inexplicable. Tradition would have been more like to have recommended the Image of a Serpent, or the Serpent itself, to be the Medium,

\* Vid. *Chandler's* Life of *Joseph*.



Medium, or Vehicle, of their Devotions to the *Devil*, or any mischievous, malignant Being of a spiritual Nature, than the *Goat*, which was a tame Animal, and of the domestic Kind.—But, at the Time when the *Alexandrian Jews* first translated the Old Testament into *Greek*; and the *Jews*, which settled in the *Eastern Provinces* of the *Macedonian Empire*, might translate it into the *vulgar Chaldee*; *Idolatry* might have multiplied into many new Branches, for which there were not Words in *Moses's Days*. There was the Worship of *Goats*, and it might be attended with many indecent and obscene Rites, as the *Goat of Mendes*, at and before the Age of the Translation, and so might be transmitted down to Posterity, under a very offensive Idea, and the Translators, having the Notion of the *Devil*, a potent evil Being, very familiar in their Days, they might translate it *Devils*. As the *Greek Version* now doth the same Word, *Isa. xiii. 21.* Satyrs shall dance there, [*Schabirim, Devils.* *Δαίμονια ἐρχέσονται.*] At the Time of this Translation being made, the Notion of all the Variety of inferior, *sylvan Deities*, was familiar in *Paganism*; which might seduce them into the Practice of translating the Names of *ancient Superstition* by Words, which had a *modern Idea* annexed to them. And, as some Things, which were very distinctly understood, when the Law was given, might become obscure, by the ceasing of the ancient Customs, to which they referred, these who translated that Word, when such Customs might not be common, used a Word which had a very bad Idea, tho' not that very Idea which was Original in the Law. Obsolete Superstitions might, in some few Instances, be thus lost; and yet the Law would be a Guard against an Evil, as bad as that which was first prohibited under that Word.

## S E C T. III.

*On the Worship of Statues and Images.*

I NOW proceed to examine, and attempt to explain, the other principal Additions to the first *Idolatry*. For they were all of later Date than the *Sydereal Worship*, and were, most probably, introduced with some Reference to it.—And, I apprehend, that the next Innovation in their Worship, or Addition to their System of *Idolatry*, was the erecting little Columns, or Pillars, in Honour of the *Sydereal Gods*, the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and consecrating Groves and Places of Devotion, in which these Statues, or Pillars, were placed, and where their *Sacra* were to be performed. I shall here make use of the same Maxim, which I have laid down before, *viz.* That there must have been some *pretended Reason* for every Innovation in their Religion, and every Addition, which they introduced into their sacred Solemnities. Even in our own Days, a new Ceremony is brought in on some pretended greater Decency,



or Solemnity, as that it is apt to strike us more powerfully, and bring some useful Truth more affectingly to our Minds, by the frequent Use of it. Thus many *new* Ceremonies crept into the Christian Church, near the Primitive Times; and thus more grown and confirmed Ones are vindicated, by the learned *Romanists*, as in their Explanation of the numerous Rites in solemnizing Baptism,\* &c.

1. The Notion of the Omniscience, and All-sufficiency of the One true God, was fully imparted by *Noah*, to all the Tribes in the Dispersion, and therefore all Original Worship was paid to him alone. But, when they came to worship his great Servants, tho' at first in a subordinate Way, yet, as Error is very depraving, they might almost insensibly lapse into a Forgetfulness of the supreme Deity, and settle in their Devotions to those subordinate and secondary Gods.—And, as the Original, Patriarchal Worship was performed to the supreme God, the omniscient Witness of all their Difficulties and Wants, so all Places were alike sacred to them. Altars were erected in such Situations as were most convenient for the Worshippers. This was the Practice of all the ancient Patriarchs, recorded by *Moses*, who built Altars, where-ever they pitched their Tents.

Religion has naturally but *one Object*, the Great Invisible Being, all-knowing and all-sufficient, to whom all the intelligent World are to make their devout Applications.

As the *Object of Worship*, we must conceive of Him as an infinite, independent, sovereign Mind, who has created all Things, absolutely rules and governs all, and judges every Person, as to the Degrees of Prosperity or Adversity, which they respectively deserve; as possessing all natural Perfections, omnipotent Power, and all-comprehending Knowledge, and existing in all Duration, and filling all Space with his Presence, He must be the natural Object of Trust and Dependance for *every* one, at *all Times*, and in *all Places*. This is the God of the Universe, whom the Greatest ought to fear, and on whom the Weakest may rely, and therefore, whom all should worship.—But, when the Object of religious Worship was once changed from *One* to *many*, it would speedily degenerate into this farther Alteration from the original Notion of *One infinite*, into that of *many finite* Gods. And, tho' the Notion of one infinite Deity might not be quite lost, for some Ages; yet accustomed themselves frequently to pray to many Gods, and to put their Trust in those visible Beings, the heavenly Luminaries, to whom they made their religious Addresses, their Sentiments would be gradually corrupted and debauched. By thinking of the infinite, invisible God but seldom, and seldom praying to Him, it would come to this at last, that they would not think of Him at all.—And, when Men came to put their Trust in two or three, or in any more than One God, they could scarce avoid falling into the Notion of *finite* Gods. They could not but think, that each of these Gods had their own

\* Vid. *Catholic Christian instructed*.



own individual Power, and individual Knowledge. The Sun had it's own Power, and the Moon had it's own Power, and the Stars had each of them their own Power. Their Powers must, therefore, be each of them finite, and limited. The Power of the Sun was as much short of all Power, as those Powers amounted to, which the Moon and Stars were in Possession of, in an independent Way.

2. As soon as the Notion of *finite* Gods came to prevail, the Notion of interfering Competitors and *Rival* Gods could not be long kept out of their degenerate System.—If they conceived the Powers of their Gods to be equal, then they might possibly interfere; so that, by the Energy of two equal, opposite Powers, nothing could be done. If they apprehended them to be unequal, a Worshipper of the inferior God might be baffled in his Expectations, by the Power of the superior Deity; tho' he had been ever so punctual in his Devotions to the meaner, heavenly Power. And again; as none of the Sydereal Gods could be infinite in *Knowledge*, any more than in *Power*, I can see no Security that their Worshippers could ever have, that the different Gods would always approve the same Thing. And, if they did not always approve the same Thing, the Will of the more potent Deity would always prevail; unless He could be believed to connive at the Actions of an inferior Deity, or that the Gods were indifferent and unconcerned about all Events; except when they were moved by our Prayers and Sacrifices.

3. In Connection with the Notion of finite Gods, they could not well avoid sliding into the discouraging Sentiment of *absent* Gods. This the very Aspects of the heavenly Luminaries would suggest to them.—They saw the Sydereal Gods were, in a Sense, *finite*; for their Bodies were limited, or bounded, on all Sides; they were but in one Place at once. In the Morning they saw the Sun himself in a different Part of his Orbit, or celestial Journey, than at Noon or Night. They could not but observe, that the Stars often disappeared, or seemed absent, and that the heavenly Bodies were changing Hemispheres every Minute, as they successively rose to one, they set to another City, in perpetual Revolutions.

4. They might naturally enough fall into the discouraging Notion of general Gods, or Gods, who minded all the World alike, which must very much damp their Hopes of Success in their particular Devotions. They could not but observe, that the Effects, which the heavenly Luminaries had upon human Affairs, were in a way of common and general Operation, so that their Influences were very much alike in the same Region, and about the same Time.

The most devout Worshipper of the Sun could not but observe, that the Sun warmed and lighted Millions, as well as himself, every Day; that those, who were the most indevout, had their Days as long, and as bright as his, their Air as calm, and their Seasons as placid, as those who were most careful in their Sacrifices. They observed, that the Moon's nightly Influences were extended alike to all about them. And what Good, or Hurt, any Planet did,  
by



by it's salutiferous or malignant Rays, as to healthy or sickly Seasons, was much alike to all about them, and might as often be fatal to the Devout, as the Indevout and Profane. A great Difficulty in this Case would arise, How they should, by their Prayers, obtain an Interest in the particular Protection, and special Guardianship of their Gods? These Sydereal Deities could not be the Objects of particular Confidence and Trust in any Emergencies. If they dispensed their Favours, or Influences, only in a common, promiscuous Way.

Both true Piety and Superstition seem to agree in this, that the Object of particular Devotion must be such a Being, as can distinguish, and can hear us, and help us in such a manner, as He doth not afford to the Irreligious and Profane, and this in all Extremities, at all Times, and in all Places, when we pray unto him.

I would next observe, that this Notion of finite, rival, absent, or general Gods, must unavoidably cast the Worshippers into great Uncertainties and Perplexities of Mind, whenever they prayed for personal and particular Deliverances, in any pressing Emergencies. Instead of affording them any composed, steady Hopes in their Religion, and any satisfying rational Confidence and Trust in the Objects of it; this Notion must rather create Anxieties, gloomy Fears, distracting Doubts and Despondencies, whenever Men came into new Straits. There is a Declivity in the Paths of Error, in which the Descent is similar to that of heavy Bodies, the Velocities increasing, the further they proceed. When this corrupt Creed of *Polytheism* had prevailed awhile; when it no longer pleased, on account of its Novelty; and, when it had rendered the true Notion of God very obscure; it would be very like to betray them into one of these Evils. Either,

5. Absolute Irreligion and *Atheism*, or a dark, inventive and unsatisfying *Superstition*. *Polytheism* might naturally enough nourish Irreligion and *Atheism*. For, if once Men came to familiarize their Thoughts to the Notion of *many* Gods, they could not but think of *finite* Gods, which, in consequence, might be sometimes absent. If they had now lost the Notion of One infinite God, so that they were reduced to the Necessity of trusting in these finite Deities, or none; it might very easily happen, that when they fell into inextricable Straits and Embarrassments in their Affairs, and found no Relief by their Devotions, they might begin to indulge a secret Distrust of *that* God, in whose Aid they had before confided, as being a finite Deity. They might suspect Him to be either too weak to relieve them, or indifferent and unconcerned about their Affairs, or averse to their Requests. When they had proceeded thus far, it was but a Step further, to begin a fullen Suspicion of *all the other* Gods, as they were all finite too. A finite God is so great an Incongruity and Absurdity, that, when Men were prest with Difficulties, out of which they could not extricate themselves, they must inevitably fall into perplexing Doubts and Fears; so that, at first, they would have but little, and at last, nothing to trust in.—Their frequent returning Straits would require a potent, present



present Deity, always *able*, and, in proper Circumstances and Conditions, always *willing*, to relieve them. But when the Worshippers conceived of them as finite Beings, and when they were soured with their Sufferings and disappointed Hopes in Prayers and Sacrifices, and had circulated thro' the whole Catalogue of their Gods, in unavailing Devotions, these gloomy Doubts arising from all this, might naturally terminate in an *Epicurean Atheism*.

6. If they fell not into downright Irreligion and Atheism, they would be very like to sink into a dark, inventive *Superstition*, to find out different Methods of making their Gods attentive and propitious to them. The incongruous System of *many*, that is *finite* Gods, would constrain them to have recourse to new Expedients, to obtain the Favour of their Gods, when they had long prayed in vain. It would put them upon making the best Provision they could against the Inconveniences which they were aware of, in so bad a *Theology*; as to the Inattention of their finite Deities, and to silence their Doubts, and answer, or obviate their Scruples.—One great and obvious Fear would be, as to the *Absence*, or *Indifferency* and *Unconcern* of their Gods about the Affairs of their Worshippers. And as Superstition chiefly drives Men to pray in particular Exigencies and Extremities, if they found themselves possessed with these Fears, their Devotion would be very spiritless. If the God was absent, when a beloved Consort, or favourite Child, lay at the Point of Death, their Prayers would be attended with no Hope.

7. In these and such like Circumstances, Superstition, for ever laborious in Error, found out the *Device* of erecting little Columns, Pillars or Statues, in Honour of the Sydereal Gods, and then planted and consecrated Groves or some retired Places, in which to place them. To these they hoped the Gods would have a particular Regard and Attention, as being consecrated to their particular Honour, and set apart for their Worshippers assembling in Companies, or resorting alone, to present their Supplications.—After this, when they often met with Disappointments as before, they might add a new Invention of consecrating particular Persons, dedicated to the special Service of that Deity, who should perform their Sacrifices, and present their Prayers, and observe all the *Sacra*, or mystic Rites, for the appeasing the offended Deity, and expiating the Crimes of the Worshippers, that the God might be propitious to them.—But it is probable that the Institution of Priests was much later than the Consecration of Pillars and Groves. For, as the first Sacrificers, who presided in Family Devotions, were, doubtless, the Heads of Families; so probably the Heads of the Nations, or the chief Magistrates, presided for some Ages, at the more public Solemnities of Religion, within their several little States or Cities.

8. Tho' there be no ancient Author, who gives us an Account of the first setting up of these Statues or Pillars, or attempts to relate the original Reasons for them; yet, if we may make Conjectures, I cannot but think, that



that this may be esteemed a very natural one, as to the Causes or Reasons of the primitive Dedication of these Images and Groves, that it was to engage the Gods to a special Presence at those Places, and a peculiar Attention to what was transacted to their Honour at them. For they could not apprehend, that a Log or Stone of their own fashioning or rearing could have Power to save, more than any other Log, since they could not of themselves, or by their own Power, put any new Virtue into it. But we are not wholly without Authorities, that it was so apprehended as to the Presence of the Gods. The celebrated *Maimonides* gives this Account of the *Zabian* Opinions on this Subject, which (he says) is extracted from the ancient Monuments of *Sabianism*.

"They erected Images and Statues to the Stars; to the Sun Golden Ones, to the Moon Silver, and so they divided the Metals among the Stars and Planets. They then built Chapels or Temples to them, and placed the Statues in them, imagining that certain *Virtues of the Stars* were infused into them, and that some Ethereal Spirit resided in them, whereby there was, as it were, a present Intelligence." \* And if this Jewish Rabbi should be suspected of any Misrepresentation, we have the Testimony of a very learned Heathen Philosopher *Plotinus*, who, like the other *Platonists* of that Age, laboured to represent *Paganism* as plausibly as possible; and yet it is evident, from the Manner of introducing this Account, that even *Plotinus* himself did not derive this Explication from any of the very ancient Authors; who could assign the real Motives, or Reasons, on which the first *Idolaters* acted, when they set up these Pillars or Statues. But he himself, upon a careful Weighing of the Matter, excogitates a Reason of this Practice of Images; and conjectures that they might at first act from the same.

"It appears to me, *μὴ δυνάμει αὐτῶν τοῦ σώματος*, That the ancient wise Men, who desired to have the Gods especially present with them; when they had made Statues, and performed religious Ceremonies, as at the Consecration of those Statues, they fixed their Thoughts on the Nature of the Universe, or the Soul of the World; and they gathered from thence, that the Nature of the Soul, or *Anima Mundi*, is easily drawn down or attracted into the Statue, and may be most easily detained *δεξασθαι παρὰ*, if the Statue be congruous to it, and fit to take the Impression, so as to retain a Portion of that Soul or Spirit." †

I own there is great Obscurity in this Explication, but the Point I am upon is clearly enough asserted; that they apprehended a certain heavenly Spirit descended into, and resided in those Statues, which were rightly dedicated; and that some Power and Energy of the Gods was always, especially present with them. It is probable that they did not reason so philosophically at first, as *Plotinus* here represents them. But they were distressed with

\* *Mor. Nevoch. Part 3. c. 29.*

† *Plotin. Ennead. IV. Lib. 3. c. 11. p. 380.*



with the Apprehension of their Gods being sometimes *absent*, or *inattentive* to their Devotions; and so were driven to fix these sacred Statues and Groves, in Hopes to have the Gods more especially observant of their Prayers, at those Places, and more present with them.

It is true, indeed, the only Editor of this Philosopher's Works, *Marfilus Ficinus*, gives this Title to this Chapter of *Plotinus*, *Of the Power of Magic to bring down the Spirit of the Gods*. But the Passage, I have cited, seems to me rather to refer to the *ordinary* Reasons of the *ancient Pagans*, for setting up their Images, to the Honour of the Gods; viz. that they hoped the Presence of a Divine Spirit would be more especially inherent in the Images, on account of their dedicating them religiously to the God, than to any Account of magical Incantations.

Further we must observe, that there are some Intimations in ancient History, that this Notion of *absent Gods* was alledged against *Idolaters*, as an Absurdity in their Religion. That severe Irony of the *Hebrew Prophet*, made use of, to the Priests of *Baal*, *1 Kings xviii. 27.* is grounded on this Opinion, that their Gods might be absent, or otherwise engaged, so as not to be at Leisure to attend or help their Worshipers. *Cry aloud, for he is a God; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a Journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.*—And that *Idolaters* themselves were not without their Doubts and Suspicions on this Head, notwithstanding all their Expedients, appears particularly from that impious Piece of Flattery of the *Athenians* to *Demetrius Poliorcetes*, when they received him with Divine Honours into their City. It is related by *Athenæus*, and Part of the profane Hymn is set down by that curious, entertaining Writer, *Lib. 6. p. 253. apud me.*

ὦ τέ κραίσις παῖ ποσειδῶνός σε  
καὶ θεὰς ἀφροδίτης·  
ἄλλοι μὲν ἢ μακρὰν γὰρ ἀπεχούσιν σε  
ἢ ἐκ ἔχουσιν ὤτα·  
ἢ ἐκ εἰσιν, ἢ ἐκ προσεχούσιν ἡμῖν ἔδε· ἐν·  
σε δὲ παρόνθ' ὀρώμεν  
οὐ ξύλινον, οὐδὲ λίθινον, ἀλλ' ἀληθινον.

“ O Thou Son of the mighty God, *Neptune*, and the Goddess *Venus*!  
“ Other Gods are either far from us, or they are destitute of Hearing, or  
“ they are no Gods, or they are unconcerned about our Affairs. But Thee  
“ we behold, a present God, not of Wood or Stone, but a true Deity.”

Now it is very plain, That the *Pagan* World did soon introduce this Practice of erecting Columns and Statues in Honour of their Gods, and (I think) this was originally in Honour of the Sydereal Deities, or heavenly Bodies. This was done, for some Reasons, which seemed to them to be satisfactory, at that Time; and this of engaging the special Presence, or Attention, of their Gods, seems to be the most natural that can be thought of.



## S E C T. III.

*What Sort of Images, or Statues, were the first.*

**B**UT we must now enquire what Sort of Idols or Statues were the first, which were made use of, for religious Purposes, or the Uses of Superstition. And we have not, I apprehend, any Intimation, that 1. The Arts of Statuary and Painting were arrived at any great Perfection so early as the Use of Idols in their Religious Worship. Wherefore it is not probable, that those first Symbols of the Sydereal Gods could have been any very artificial or curious Figures.—Besides the Bodies of the Stars, and Sun and Moon being, to Appearance, only luminous Globes of Fire or Light, it is not easy to conceive what Figures they could think of, by which to represent them.—But, as we have no Writers of remote Pagan Antiquity, except the *Greeks*, we must make use of their Evidence, as far as it will go, for clearing this Point.

2. The first Symbols of the Gods were, according to the ancient *Greek* Writers, small Pillars or Columns, which they set up, and dedicated to their Honour, before which the Worshippers paid their Devotions, and presented their Prayers and Vows, and offered their Sacrifices. These sacred Pillars, or little Columns, were called *σηλαι* and *κιονες*. The *Greek* Translators made use of the Word *σηλαι*, in translating *Malzebah* in *Levit. xxvi. 1.* Ye shall not rear up a *standing Image*, as our Translators express it. So in *Deut. xvi. 22.* Neither shalt thou *set up any Image or Pillar*. These seem to have been *fixed Columns* erected in some Place which they dedicated for the Dwelling or Residence of the God.—These original Columns were of different Shape, pyramidal or cylindrical, or quadrangular. They were most commonly pyramidal, or conical, *πυραμοειδεις*, when dedicated to the Astereal Gods; and cylindrical, when, in later Times, they dedicated them to the Earth. This seems natural enough to the Simplicity of those early Ages, who had no early Patterns of Image-Worship to copy from; and who, as I apprehend, were sinking gradually into greater Barbarism and Ignorance, the further they were removed from the Age of the general Dispersion, for some Time.

That this was the most ancient Kind of Idol-Worship, *Clemens Alexandrinus* \* declares to be his own Opinion; “ Before they arrived at any great Accuracy in Statuary, and the Making of Images, the ancient *Idolaters* erected

\* *Clem. Alexand. Strom. Lib. 1.*

Πρω γαρ εν ακριβοθηναι τας των αγαλματων  
Σχεσεις κιονας ισαντες οι παλαιοι εστισαν  
Τετες ως αρισδρυμαλα τε δεκ.



“ erected certain Columns or Pillars, as the Seats of the Gods ; in which  
 “ they might reside among them. *Αφιδρυματὰ θεῶν*, and certain Divine Powers  
 “ or Virtues might be present with them.”

The same learned Father quotes another Passage concerning the sacerdotal Attendance of *Callitboe*, the first Priestess of *Juno Argiva*, which intimates what Kind of Idol she attended upon.

Καλλιθον κλειδονχ<sup>ο</sup> Ὀλυμπιαδ<sup>ο</sup> Βασιλεις  
 Ἡρης Ἀργεius, ἣν τεμμασι καὶ θυσανοισιν  
 Πρωτὴ ἐκοσμησεν, περὶ Κίονα μακρὸν ἀνάσσης.

“ *Callitboe* was the Priestess of the *Juno* of *Argos*, who was first adorned  
 “ with sacred Fillets and Vestments, to attend on the stately Column of the  
 “ celestial Queen, or who first adorned the stately Column, which was the  
 “ Symbol of the Goddess, with sacred Robes and Diadems.”

These Pillars were set up as a Sort of Pledges of the Presence of their Deities. And this was as far as they could well go at first. For, as the heavenly Bodies had no Shape of their own, to distinguish them from each other, except their apparent Magnitudes, or their Colours and different Lustre and Intensity of Light ; and, as they had no Figure, or Shape, to distinguish them from other visible Objects, unless lucid Spheres could be taken for their Shape ; so the first *Idolaters* could not have any Notion, in the Beginning, of erecting any Statues to them, in human Shape, or any other Animal Figure, which should be considered to have any Resemblance to them.

3. The Materials, indeed, of these consecrated Columns, were very different at first, and were diversified and multiplied both in Cost and Art, as *Superstition* increased. They begun with dedicating Pillars of Wood and Stone, which were very coarse and inartificial in their Structure, as well as cheap in their Materials. *Pausanias* gives a celebrated Instance of this Kind, in his Description of the City of *Pharæ* in *Achaia*.\* “ Near the Statue of *Mercury* “ (says he) there were set up near thirty Stones of a quadrangular Form. All “ these the *Pharians* pay some Worship to, calling each of them after the “ Name of some God.” But the most remarkable is, the Note which follows. “ Indeed, (says *Pausanias*) it was the Custom of all the ancient “ *Greeks*, to worship such rude, unpolished, unwrought Stones, *λίθους ἀργούς*, “ instead of more regular Statues.”

There are several more Instances of the same Kind, collected by this curious Antiquary, in his Travels thro’ *Greece*, which evidence, that the first Idols, in that Country, were both of common and cheap Materials, and of very rude and inartificial Make. *Pausan. in Bæotius. Ibid. Achaicis.* And the most ancient Accounts of the Idolatry of all Nations, intimate the same Thing.



*Clemens Alexandrinus* (in *Cohort. ad Gentes*) observes, that a wooden Block, or Trunk of a Tree, was an ancient Statue of *Juno*, at *Samos*. *Plutarch* informs us, that two Beams of Timber, joined by two other shorter cross Beams, was the old Representation of *Castor* and *Pollux*. The *Romans* anciently worshipped a Spear instead of a Statue of *Mars*, as *Clemens* says from *Varro*. \*

There were, indeed, many ancient Nations, who used no Images, nor even Temples or Altars. *Herodotus* † tells us, “ that the ancient *Persians* “ disused all these, and that they esteemed those, who did make use of “ them, guilty of great Folly.” But this *Persian* Sentiment seems to refer chiefly to the Practice of Image-worship: “ For, (says *Herodotus*) this was, “ in my Opinion, because they did not, like the *Greeks*, imagine, that the “ Gods were descended from Mankind.” *Οὐκ ἀνθρωπογενεῖς ἐνομισαί.*

They might, notwithstanding, have some sacred Symbols of the Gods; for the great Historian tells us, immediately after, “ that they worshipped the “ Sun, Moon, and Stars, the Earth, Fire, and Winds; and that these were “ their only ancient Gods, even from the Beginning.” And they might have some consecrated Grove, or venerable high Place, tho’ they had no Temples at first; for he observes, that “ the Tops of the Mountains were holy.”

*Maximus Tyrius*, in his celebrated 38th *Dissertation* upon this Question, *Whether Statues should be dedicated?* Tho’ he takes so much Pains to prove, “ that the Gods should be worshipped by the Medium of Statues in human “ Shape; because our Minds are the nearest Similitude of the Gods; and “ that, therefore, our Bodies may be thought the most fit to represent them; “ yet he acknowledges, that the Worship of many Nations was without “ any human Statues, and some without any Images at all. ‡

“ The *Persians* (says he) worship Fire, that voracious and insatiable Element;” and he exclaims against them as highly absurd, “ that they should “ pass by, or neglect, those ἀγάλματα, or Statues, viz. *Objects of Devotion*, the “ mild Earth, the lucid Sun, the useful Ocean, the fruitful Rivers, the refreshing Air, and the Heavens themselves; to confine their Devotion to “ this raging and most violent Element.—The *Egyptian* Practices are equally “ censurable, who worship a Bull, a Bird, or a Goat; not to mention the various Monsters of the *Nile*, who have all a mortal Body, and contemptible “ Life, where their God dies, and is lamented, as well as worshipped.” It is evident, that our Philosopher is here reproaching *Egypt*, with the Worship of brute Animals, and not only their Statues, so that he speaks of their later *Idolatries*. He proceeds, “ The *Hesperian Lybians* hold the Mountain *Atlas* to “ be sacred, and that lofty Hill was instead of a Statue to them, and him they “ invoked, even in Oaths.”—The *Celts* worship *Jupiter*, but the *Celtic Statue of Jupiter*, is a stately Oak, ἀγάλμα.

“ The *Pæonians* worship the Sun, but the only Image or Statue of the Sun, “ among

\* *Ibid.* p. 30.† *Lib. I. c. 131.*‡ *Max. Tyr. Dissert. 38. p. 400. Edit. Davis.*



“ among that People, is a small Globe, or Ball, *σφαῖρα*, upon a long Pole.  
 “ The *Arabians* worship a God, which, says our Author, I know not what  
 “ to call, but the *εἰδωλον*, or Image, which I saw among them, was only a  
 “ quadrangular Stone. The Inhabitants of *Paphos* worship *Venus*, but the  
 “ Statue is most like a white Pyramid.”—Now, if the Statues erected to the  
 Gods, which were worshipped so late, as the Reign of *Antoninus Pius*, were  
 such rude and shapeless Things, this demonstrates the very high Antiquity of  
 this Usage. For, in those Days, and long before, Statuary was arrived at a  
 great Perfection.

What *Herodian* \* tells us of the *Phœnician Deity*, the Sun, which, in  
 their Language, they called *Heliogabalus*, is also fully to our present Purpose.  
 \* This, says he, was the *Phœnician God*, which all the circumjacent Country  
 “ had in the highest Veneration. There was a most magnificent Temple  
 “ erected to him, adorned with much Gold and Silver, and Variety of  
 “ costly Stones of much Curiosity, Elegance and Expence. But (as he adds  
 “ afterwards) there was no Statue, or regular Image, after the manner of the  
 “ *Greeks and Romans* ; but only a great Stone, circular at the Base, and gra-  
 “ dually lessening to a Point, like a Cone. The sacred Stone was of a black  
 “ Colour, and they pretended, that it descended from Heaven, or fell from  
 “ *Jupiter*.”—This was in the Reign of *Heliogabalus*, who, tho’ a Monster  
 himself, lived in an Age, when every Art was at it’s Height. And when,  
 therefore, such mean Statues could not be made use of, out of Necessity, but  
 must have been only venerable, for their high Antiquity ; and so may be taken  
 for the Patterns and Samples of primitive *Idolatry*. And, tho’ our Author  
 takes Notice of magnificent Temples, and the costly Furniture of them, yet we  
 have Reason to conclude, That that Temple was much more modern, than the  
 Image, or Statue itself, which was placed in it ; for the Temple favours of  
 the Grandeur and Wealth of modern Times, and the Statue of the Simplicity  
 of more ancient Ones. The Grandeur of the *Priests*, mentioned by *Herodian*,  
 also, appears to be modern.

*Tacitus*, the celebrated *Roman Historian*, in his Discourse of the Customs  
 of the ancient *Germans*, among other Things, gives us an Account of their  
 religious Opinions and Rites, thus : † “ They did not think it worthy of the  
 “ Grandeur and Dignity of the Gods, to enclose them within Walls, or to  
 “ represent them by any Resemblance of the human Figure and Countenance :  
 “ But they consecrated Groves, and deep, shady Woods to them, whose so-  
 “ lemn dark Recesses they held sacred, as the Residence of the Gods.”  
 This Passage intimates, that in some of these sacred Woods, there were no  
 Images, or Idols, at all. But yet, notwithstanding the Sacredness of the  
 Centre of the Wood, or holy Place, it is evident, from what *Tacitus* observes  
 a little before, p. 633. that they must have had some Sort of moveable Image,  
 or

\* *Herodian, Hist. Lib. 5. cap. 5. p. 165. apud Me. Edit. Plant.*

† *Tacit. de Morib. Germ. p. 634.*



or Pillar. "For, when they went to War, they took their Gods with them into the Field; which were *Signa detracta-Lucis*, their Images taken from the sacred Groves." So that they were not wholly without Idols, or some Symbols and Pledges of the Presence of their Gods; but only they had none in human Shape.

But, as the learned Dr. Owen conjectures, the Germans might have, instead of Stones or Columns, which the more Eastern Countries erected, a living, growing Oak, or the Trunk of an ancient One, as a Symbol of the Aëthereal Gods. To this Claudian seems to refer, in his first *Panegyric on Stilico*. In recounting the Quiet that ensued on his Victories, *Claud. de Laud. Stilic. Pan. I.*

"*Ut procul Herciniæ per vasta silentia Sylvæ*

"*Venari tutò liceat; Lucosque vetustâ*

"*Relligione truces, at Robora Numinis instar*

"*Barbariis*——

And *Lucan* hints at the like Sort of rude Deities,

——"*Simulachraque mæsta Deorum*

"*Arte carent, cæsisque extant informia Truncis.*

"*Ipse Situs, putrique facit jam robore pallor.*

"*Attonitos.*"

*Philostratus, Vit. Apol. Lib. V. cap. 1.* relates, that there was a very ancient Temple at *Gades*, dedicated to *Hercules*, but in which there was no Statue, *ἀγαλμα*, but mean, unsculptured Altars, and that the Inhabitants shewed some *σηλαί*, Pillars, inscribed with certain unknown Characters, of a quadrangular Form like Anvils.

Now, so many Instances of ancient Columns, Pillars, or Statues, set up for the Purposes of *Superstition*, of mean Materials and Structure, and which were as much venerated, as the most correct and laboured Statues of After-ages, tho' adorned with all the Improvements of Sculpture, and Statuary, are a plain Intimation, that *Idols* were at first rude, inartificial Things, not framed in human, or any other animal Shape whatsoever, from the Beginning.

### C H A P. XIII.

*On the Accounts of Idolatry, in the Books of Moses, &c.*

THIS Account of the Original of *Idolatry*, which is given by *Pagan* Writers, may be, in a great measure, confirmed by the History of the *Old Testament* itself; and this must be more satisfactory, as these Accounts of the sacred History will reach back, much nearer to the Times of the Beginning



ning of Worship, by sensible Signs, Images, or corporeal Representations, than those to which the Authors I have cited, can be supposed to refer.—The Accounts, which I have given of the *Objects* of their Worship, the heavenly Bodies, their Images, or *Columns*, and their sacred *Groves*, where they set up their Pillars, and performed their superstitious *Sacra* to them, are all, I think, pretty clearly established by the *Old Testament*.—As to the Names of the Gods, which were made use of in those Oriental Countries, round about *Canaan*, they are, indeed, different from the Names which occur, among the Writings of the *Greeks* and *Romans*: As *Baal*, *Ashteroth*, *Moloch*, *Chemosh*, *Dagon*, &c. And many learned Men have wearied themselves to find out who these *Gods*, or what the *Idols*, were. Some have conjectured, that they were deified Mortals, or Hero Gods; and here again, there has been a Diversity of Opinions: Some supposing them to be *Antediluvians*; and others, *Noah* and his Sons, or the Patriarchs and Heads of the different Nations, in their Settlements after the Dispersion. But the Opinion which seems to me the most probable, is, that these were Names for the Sun and Moon especially, and some other remarkable Stars, or Planets, viz. the Sydereal Deities. These were their Names in Deification, or Consecration, and in the Language of *Superstition*. And I find Dr. *Owen* and *Vossius* in the same Sentiments; with many other learned Men. What makes this probable is, that it is certain, they worshipped the heavenly Bodies very early; whereas, there is no Evidence of their worshipping any Hero Gods, in those early Ages. There is no Warning, or Prohibition, expressly against this Practice, in all the Books of *Moses*; but there are several against the other; which intimates, that the one was, and the other was not, in Use, when *Moses* wrote the Laws of the *Hebrew State*.

## S E C T. I.

## Of Ashteroth.

I SHALL begin with *Ashteroth*, as this Name first occurs in the *Mosaic History*. This Name, or Word, sometimes denotes a *Place*, sometimes a *Deity*, and sometimes other Things, distinct from both.

1. It sometimes denotes a *Place*. The first Mention of it is, *Gen. xiv. 5. In the fourteenth Year, came Chedorlaomer, and the Kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims in ASHTEROTH CARNAIM*. Most Interpreters have understood this to be the Name of a Town, or City, near which the Confederate *Eastern Kings* discomfited the *Rephaims*.\* Why it should be called so, is not agreed by the Oriental Critics. Some have fancied it was called *Carnaim*, from some two topped Hill, which was near it, because *Carnaim* is the dual Number, from *Keren*, an *Horn*; others conjecture, that it was

so

\* Synop. Critic. in Loc.



so named, from the *horned Sheep*. \* But these Things, at this Distance of Time, must be very precarious; and the Names of Places are often given so fancifully, and from such minute Circumstances, that it is difficult to ascertain their Original. As is plain from the first Names, which were given to the Countries of *America*, by the *Spaniards*, *English*, and other Adventurers, on their Arrival there.

We find it again, as the Name of a Place, *Deut. i. 4.* Being the Royal City of *Og*, one of those Potent *Amorite* Princes, who was conquered by the *Hebrews*, under *Moses's* Conduct. And, when we find this Name to have been given to many different Places, in different Countries, we may conclude, that it arose from some Occasion common to them all.

2. Again; this Word, or Name, is often expressly made use of, as the Name of a *Deity*. Thus, in describing the Apostacy of the *Hebrew Nation*, *Judges ii. 13.* *They forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashteroth*, which were the Gods of the Nations round about them. *Ashteroth* was also a *Philistine* Deity, who had a House, or little Temple, dedicated to him, in which *Saul's* Armour was hung up, after the great Victory at *Gilboa*, in which that Prince and his Sons fell, *1 Sam. xxxi. 10.* This was also the Name of a Deity of the *Sidonians*, *1 Kings xi. 5.* *Solomon followed Ashteroth*, the Goddess of the *Sidonians*.—Now, as these Countries were pretty remote from each other, it seems probable, that the Places which were named *Ashteroth*, in different Countries, were so called, on account of there being solemn *Sacra* performed to the Deity, *Ashteroth*, near, or in those Places, from which Circumstance these Cities had their Names.

3. But we must further note, That *Ashteroth* is not only made use of, for the proper Name of a Place, or of a God; but it is a Word to express a Thing, that is *Flocks*, and, particularly *Flocks of Sheep*, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, *Deut. xxviii. 4.* BLESSED SHALL be the Fruit of thy Body, and the Fruit of thy Ground, the Increase of thy Kine, and the FLOCKS of thy Sheep [*Ashteroth*.] So again, *ver. 18.* Cursed shall be the FLOCKS of thy Sheep. And in *ver. 51.* God threatening to send a mighty Nation against them, for their Disobedience, denounces this Desolation,—*They shall not leave thee Corn, Wine, or Oil, or the Increase of thy Kine, or FLOCKS [Ashteroth] of thy Sheep*, or smaller Cattle, until they have destroyed thee. This Word *Ashteroth* is translated *Flocks* in our Version, and by Words of the same Import, in all other Translations; and common Sense requires that it should be so: For, tho' they might be cursed in *Ashteroth*, their Idol, yet the Promise, in *ver. 4.* could not be made good, in this Sense; they could not be BLESSED in Him by the Word, or Promise of God, who will not give his Glory to another, nor his Praise to graven Images.

4. I now come to enquire what *Pagan* Deity was worshipped under the Name

\* Perhaps it might be so named, from its worshipping *Ashteroth*, which signified the Moon, which appears like Horns, soon after the Change.



Name of *Ashteroth*; and what we may conceive to have been the Occasions of its having that Name.

Some of the Names of their Gods were given them in the pompous Language of *Superstition*, to denote their greatest Qualities, and others to express their particular Expectations from their Gods. Thus *Baal*, *Moloch*, and the like, denote Supremacy, Dominion, and Power; but *Ashteroth*, in the plural Form of the Word, seems to me to point out an *Office-God*, if the Expression may be allowed, one to whom they prayed, *at first*, on a particular Business or Occasion, more especially, at least.

I am of Opinion, that *Ashteroth*, which was so celebrated a Deity among all the ancient Nations adjacent to *Canaan*, was the *Moon*, and that, under that Name of Deification, they worshipped this Luminary. It is obvious, that when the heavenly Bodies were deified, they had other Names given them, in the Calendar, as I may say, or in the pompous Language of *Superstition*, than in their natural Language. The Sun was no longer called by the common Name of that Luminary in the Heavens, but *Baal*, a Name of Dignity, Dominion, and Power. In another Country, he had the Name of *Moloch*, an Appellation of like princely Signification and Import. The Moon also had its Name of Deification, which I take to have been *Ashteroth*, a Name of Office, or expressive of some particular Expectations, which they had from that Luminary, with regard to their *Flocks*. Various Conjectures have been made by Learned Men, as to the Original of this Name *Ashteroth*. Thus *R. D. Kimchi* is cited by *Selden. de Diis Syr.* 232. that this Deity was called *Ashteroth*, because the Idols or Images were in the *Shape of Sheep*. But, I think, it will be difficult to find any Instances of this Species of Idols prevailing so early in ancient *Paganism*; tho' *Jupiter Ammon* had Ram's Horns, with which some of his Statues were surmounted, which I think was the nearest Approach to it. The great *Scaliger (in Conjectaneis)* says, "*Suspi-*  
"*ceris dictum a Victimarum Multitudine.* Seld. *ibid.* that one may suspect,  
" that this Deity was called *Ashteroth*, from the Multitude of Victims offered  
" to him." But I should think a more probable Account may be given of the Original of applying this Name to this Luminary, *viz.* that as they had a Notion, that the Moon more especially presided over the Night, and by some heavenly Influence peculiarly governed its Affairs. And that, in that Season, the rabid Wolf, and the other ravening Beasts of Prey, range about from their Dens; and also, the Herds of Robbers and Spoilers often march forth to plunder and destroy; so, in this Time of Darkness, their defenceless *Flocks* of Sheep and Lambs would be exposed to the greatest Danger. And as a principal Part of the Wealth of those early Ages consisted in Sheep, which were as necessary for Cloathing, as for Food; and knowing them (as I said) to be most exposed in the Night-time, both to forest Beasts, and rapacious Men: For these Reasons, they might particularly address themselves, in their Devotions, to *the Moon*, which ruled the Night, the Season of particular Danger



to their *Flocks*. And they worshipped that deified Luminary, under the Name *Ashteroth*, or as the Guardian, *των Ashteroth*, of their *Flocks*. And hereby it might easily happen, that this Deity had, in the Language of *Idolatry*, a Name of the plural Form, which I think no other of them had.

That *Ashteroth* was the ancient Name for the Moon, in their Theology, I conclude from this, that *Astarte* was most probably the Name for a *Phœnician* Goddess; under which Name, they worshipped the Moon in later Times. The learned *Gerb. Vossius* brings several Authorities to prove, that *Astarte* was the Moon, among the Orientals, particularly a famous Passage from *Lucian* himself, *de Deâ Syriâ*. "There is another Temple in *Phœnicia*, belonging to the *Sidonians*, which they themselves assert to be the Temple of *Astarte*; and it is my Opinion, that *Astarte* was the Moon." \*

It is plain, indeed, from this Passage of *Lucian*, that *Idolatry* had undergone very great Changes, by the various Deification of Mortals, the Alteration of Rites, Names and Places of Worship; so that the original and primitive Superstitions were become obscure, even as to the Objects of them. At first, the Objects of their Worship were (probably) few, as the Sun, and Moon, and Planets; but the same Luminary might have many Names, as the Moon was *Astarte*, *Venus*, *Isis*, *Diana*, in different Countries; and they mixed so many Fables of *Theogonics*, and *Mythical Physiology*, that their System of Superstition became an intricate Thing.

It is, therefore, no Wonder that, about the Time of the *Antonines*, when *Lucian* flourished, † it should be something difficult to determine who or what *Astarte* was, in the most ancient Times of *Idolatry*. But yet, when so learned and laborious an Enquirer as *Lucian*, thought that *Astarte* was the Moon, we may very well acquiesce in his Opinion; and his speaking something dubiously of it, intimates, that he had taken Pains to examine it, in order to form a Judgment of the Point.—Now, if *Astarte* was the Name in Deification, for the Moon, among the *Phœnicians*, in later Times, the Similitude of *Astarte* to *Ashteroth*, would lead one to think, that the more modern *Astarte* was the ancient *Ashteroth*, and that, under that Name, they worshipped that Luminary.—The Languages of the different Countries adjacent to *Canaan*, would not be very unlike each other, at that Time; and a Word might be pronounced something differently, tho' composed of the same radical Letters, so that *Ashteroth* might degenerate into *Astarte*. Provincial Pronunciations of the same Language, are often found as different as this; especially when they had no Writing, or Spelling, to preserve a Standard Purity of Language.—The first, who learned Writing from the *Hebrews*, when they came to apply the Alphabet to their own native Words and Sounds, might pronounce many of them with different Powers, as particularly the Gutturals; and, as the *Hebrew* Alphabet has not the Vowels, this would admit of still greater Variation. How many Ways עשתרת may be pronounced, with different Dagesh and Vowels,

\* Vid. *Voss. Idol.* p. 207.

† *Fabric. Biblioth. Græc.*



Vowels, any one may observe, who is but the least acquainted with the *Hebrew* Orthography.—From what has been said, I conclude, that *Ashteroth* was the Name of a Deity, common to all those neighbouring Nations, and that it was not a local God, but the *Moon*, to which they all paid Devotion, on account of their *Flocks*, as the Foundation of the Name.

There is one Difficulty which occurs in the Old Testament History, which must be considered. This Idol God is expressly called the Deity, or Goddess, of the *Sidonians*, 1 *Kings* xi. 5. *Solomon went after Ashteroth, the Goddess of the Sidonians*, which the *Septuagint* translate *Astarte*. But this is not, I think, to be understood of a different Object of Worship from the *Ashtoreth* of the *Amorites*, or the *Philistines*. But it is called the *Ashteroth*, or Deity of the *Sidonians*; because of the different Rites, with which the Worship was solemnized. Tho' the same Deity was the Object, viz. the *Moon*; yet they were the *Sidonian Sacra*, which *Solomon*, or his Wives, made use of.

They burnt Incense, and made their Oblations after the *Sidonian* Manner. Their Symbol, or Pillar, or Statue, might be of peculiar Make, or Materials; their Sacrifices might be performed by different Officers, or Priests; and of different Kinds, from those used in the South of *Canaan*. And these peculiar Rites and Ceremonies made use of, in the Worship of the *Moon*, by the *Sidonians*, might denominate this Deity a *Sidonian* God, or Goddess. They might, also, before that Time, in so opulent a Place as *Sidon*, have introduced Innovations, as to the Things which they prayed for. By this Time, that Deity might be considered as the Patron and Guardian of other Things, than *Flocks*, or any rural Concerns.—In *Solomon's* magnificent and luxurious Court, those wanton Partners of his Pleasures, who were the chief Instruments of seducing him into those infamous and execrable Superstitions, would not be like to regard the *Flocks*, or any other rural Affairs. So that, tho' the Object was not changed, yet this *Sidonian* God might be worshipped, not only with different Rites, but also on a different *Occasion*; perhaps, as the Patron of their midnight Pleasures, and lawless Love, and so be emphatically called the *Sidonian* Deity.

## S E C T. II.

### Of Baal, Moloch, &c.

I SHALL next consider what is said in the *Hebrew* Scriptures, concerning *Baal*, *Moloch*, *Chemos*, *Dagon*, and such like Names; which were in the greatest Veneration in the primitive Ages of Idolatry, among the *Phœnicians*, and other neighbouring People, in Vicinity to *Canaan*.

1.) First, as to *Baal*, it sometimes occurs as the Name of a Place, or as a Part of the distinguishing Name; as *Baal Zephon*, בעל צפון a Place in the



*Eastern Border of Egypt, Exod. xiv. 2. Baal-Meon* was the Name of a Town, which the Children of *Reuben* rebuilt, or enlarged. *They built Nebo and Baal-meon*, but changed these, which were their former Names; I suppose, because they were so named from Idol-worship, particularly celebrated there, *Numb. xxxii. 38.*—There were also *Bamoth-Baal*, and *Beth-Baal-meon*, enumerated among the Cities, which the *Reubenites* had for their Portion, in the *Eastern Settlement*, beyond *Jordan*, *Josh. xiii. 17.* These were the Places in the Territory of *Heshbon*, which are mentioned, *Numb. xxxii. 38.* They were remarkable for the *High Places* of *Baal*, and the *House of Baal Meon's* being situated there. And their being celebrated Places for Idol-worship, might perhaps occasion a great Resort thither, and so make these Towns pretty populous and considerable.—*Baal-Gad*, a Town or Place in the Valley of *Lebanon*, *Josh. xi. 17.* *Baal-Hamon*, *Cant. viii. 11.* *Baal-Hazor*, *2 Sam. xiii. 23.*

2. Again; we find *Baal* was a remarkable Name for a *Pagan Deity*, not only in and near *Canaan*, but with some Variety of Pronunciation, among the *Affyrians* and *Chaldeans*, *BEL*. This Name is sometimes writ in the singular Form, as *Baal*, and sometimes plurally, *Baalim*. Not that I apprehend they had any Deity, that they called *Baalim*. But it was named and wrote singularly, to denote that *Baal* was *one* Deity, or one Object of Worship; but when it is wrote plurally *Baalim*, it is to intimate, that there were many Places consecrated to that Worship, that there was a great Variety of Rites, and Diversity of Modes and Ceremonies, observed in different Cities and Countries, by which one *Baal* was distinguished from another. This may be gathered, in Part, from the Manner of relating their first Apostacy, after the Death of *Joshua*, *Judg. ii. 11, 12, 13.* *They forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.* They followed the Gods of the People that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them. *They did Evil in the Sight of the Lord; AND SERVED BAALIM, i.e.* as I understand it, they worshipped *Baal*, according to all the different Rites, which were in Use, in all the different Countries, and People that were round about them. They complied with, or imitated all the Superstitions of the several Nations, with whatever different *Sacra* they worshipped *Baal*. They served *Baalim*, implies, that they embraced Idol-worship, according to every Country Mode; expressing, by this plural Word, their astonishing Proclivity to every Instance and Species of Idolatry.

2.) But then, I think, the Deity, which was called *Baal*, or Lord, was, in all these different Cities and Countries, *The Sun*; and that this was the Name in Deification for that Luminary. There are several Texts, which make this probable. We have a severe Threatening denounced against their Idols and false Gods, *Levit. xxvi. 30.* *I will destroy your high Places, and cut down your IMAGES, חַמָּנִים Chamanim.* Your Images of the Sun: \* This is the Sense

\* *Synops. Critic. in Loc.*



sense which many celebrated Interpreters give it. Now there is no Idol more considerable in their Catalogue, than *Baal*, and therefore it is probable, he had most of those Images consecrated to him; and, doubtless, the Threatening would be levelled against their most popular Deities, such as *Baal*; from which we may conjecture, that *Baal* was the *Sun*, since their *Images of the Sun* were especially marked out for Destruction. So again, when some considerable Reformations were predicted, the same Word is made use of, *Isa.* xvii. 7, 8. "At that Day shall a Man look to his Maker, and his Eyes shall have Respect to the Holy One of *Israel*, and he shall not look to the Altars, the Work of his Hands, neither shall respect that which his Fingers have made, either the Groves, or חמני the *Hhamanim*, the Images, or Tabernacles of the Sun." And, *Isa.* xxvii. 9. "By this, therefore, shall the Iniquity of *Jacob* be purged;—The Groves and Images, *Hhamanim*, shall not stand up." *Le Clerc* observes, that the *Septuagint* Interpreters were at a Loss, as to the Original Meaning of this Word, which occasioned their translating it variously. But our own Version generally adds in the Margin *Sun-Images*, supposing it derived from חמה *Hhamah*, *Sol*, or חם *Calor*, as the Critics observe. I shall also refer to another Text, which inclines one to the same Conclusion, *2 Kings* xxiii. 5. "And King *Josiah* put down the idolatrous Priests;—them also who burnt Incense unto BAAL THE SUN, [Baal Shemosh] and to the Moon, and to the Planets, and to all the Host of Heaven." The Words in the *Hebrew*, BAAL THE SUN, are set without any copulative *Vau* betwixt, whereas it is prefixed to all the rest, thus: Them, who burnt Incense to BAAL THE SUN, and to the Moon, and to the Planets, and to all the Host of Heaven. This Way of Expression would lead one to think, that *Baal* was the *Sun* in Deification.

It may be (*Secondly*) observed, that several Idols, which had the Name of *Baal*, are expressly distinguished, either by the *Rites*, which are mentioned to have attended their Worship; or the Places where that Worship was performed. Thus there was *Baal Peor*, so named from the infamous Nature of the Rites, and *Baal Berith* from the Place. The first, who is mentioned in Scripture, is *Baal Peor*, to whose idolatrous Worship the People were first seduced, on their Coming near *Canaan*. The sacred Historian doth not much enlarge in the Description of these detestable Idolatries, either to ascertain the Object, whether it was the *Sun*, or not; or to particularize the specific Modes of Abomination, with which *Baal Peor* was honoured among them; or the Views and Occasions of their particular Superstitions, whether they worshipped *Baal*, under the distinguishing Name of PEOR, as the God of Plenty, or the God of Pleasure, or the God of Peace and Friendship. *Moses* only relates the Transaction historically, which happened, during their Station in *Shittim*, *Numb.* xxv. 1, 2, 3. The People began to commit Whoredom with the Daughters of *Moab*. This is the general Account of the great Iniquity, into which they lapsed. And then he explains how it was brought about. They called the  
People



*People unto the Sacrifices of their Gods. And the People did EAT, and bowed down to their Gods; and Israel joined himself to Baal Peor.*

Now, as this first Apostacy of *Israel* from the Service of the true God, to any neighbouring, national Idolatry, was attended with very gross Immoralities, one may suspect, that there were some infamous Mixtures of that Kind in their very Worship. It is plain, that it was accompanied with all the Incentives to Sensuality, such as great Idol Entertainments, Feasts, and Mirth; and those were followed with such enormous Instances of Lewdness, that one would think it was occasioned by their joining in those impure Superstitions. That the Youth were greatly debauched, is manifest, from this, that the Number of the Guilty was so great, that above Twenty thousand were *cut off*, by the Appointment of the Judges, for that Crime; or by the Plague that broke out on that Occasion. This Project of seducing the *Israelites* into Uncleaness, might be ascribed very justly to the insidious Advice of *Balaam*, as it is, *Numb.* xxxi. 16, 17. And yet there might be many impure Solemnities in the Worship of *Baal Peor*, which were customary before that Time. And *Balaam* might, therefore, counsel the King of *Moab*, to proclaim a particular Grand Sacrifice, not far from the Camp: At this Solemnity, there would be a great Concourse of all Sorts of People, particularly their younger Persons, if there was such a Latitude of Pleasures customary at those idolatrous Solemnities. Their most beautiful young Women might easily be brought together, and be engaged in any infamous Practices, which the Policy of their Rulers might recommend to them; when they were accustomed to such Impurities before, as a Part of their Country Religion. But, as to what *Josephus* \* and the *Rabbins* say, about their sending their most beautiful Virgins to the Camp, to solicit the *Israelites* to Lewdness; and, by wanton Dalliance, to entangle them; and then make their Worship of their Idols the Condition of Enjoyment: This is but a Conjecture at best. *Moses* says nothing of it. And it seems most probable, that all the Artifice of *Balak* lay, in proclaiming this grand Sacrifice, to be held not *far from* the Camp; for they could build Altars at that Time, where they pleased, *Numb.* xxiii. But that there were several libidinous Ceremonies seems probable, such, perhaps, as the Prostitution of their Virgins, or some very indecent Rites, leading to it; which were known Parts of those detestable *Sacra*; and, if it was so, it would not shock those young, fair Idolaters to propose their being Instruments for seducing the Strangers into their Idolatries, even by the Prostitution of their own Persons.—From these Circumstances, many of the most learned Ancients, particularly St. *Jerome*, have imagined, that *Baal Peor* was something like the *επιαν* of the *Greeks*; and that the Worship of this *Eastern* Idol, resembled the indecent Abominations of the latter. But, tho' it is probable, that the immodest Images of this Garden God among the *Greeks*, arose in later Times; yet some indecent Representations might be copied from these *Oriental* Superstitions.

\* *Antiq. Book 4. cap. 6.*



stitutions. And, perhaps, the Worship of *Baal-Peor*, with Feasts and lascivious Rites, might be performed in Honour of the *Sun*, as the Source of Plenty, and also of that seminal Heat and prolific Fecundity, from which all Vegetable and Animal Life proceeds.\*—The learned Bishop *Cumberland*, however, being fully in the Opinion, that *Baal*, *Moloch*, and the rest of their Deities, were the Names of Hero Gods, or deified Mortals, attempts to prove that *Baal-Meon* was *Menes*, or *Misraim*; and that *Baal-Peor* was *Osiris*, from a lewd Similitude to these Fornications, which was observed in that Feast of *Osiris*, called *Pamyia*, mentioned and apologized for by *Plutarch*, in which his *Phalis* are carried in Procession, and an Image having *αἰδοῖον τριπλασιον*.† Our learned Prelate also urges, that *Menes*, or *Misraim*, being the same with *Osiris* and *Peor*, made some short Stays in *Canaan*, in his Journey from *Shenaar*, to his grand Settlement in *Egypt*; and that he left the Memorial of such his short Settlements in *Canaan*, in this Name *Baal-Meon*, and in these indecent Rites of *Baal-Peor*. But I have already shewn, that it is not probable, that *Misraim* ever travelled at all. And I hope, when I come to consider the Chronology and History of *Egypt* more distinctly, that I shall be able to demonstrate further, that the *Menes* of *Herodotus* could not be the *Misraim* of *Moses*. And, suppose we should not be able at this Distance, to give an Account of the Name *Baal-Meon*, there's no great Wonder in it, nor doth any great Matter that I know of depend upon it. But as to the Name *Peor*, that may very likely be derived from the infamous Rites, which the Word *Peor* is thought to import, by the Critics.

## S E C T. III.

## Of Moloch.

THE Second Idol, or false God, who is distinguished by particular Rites, is *Moloch*; and this seems to have been as detestable for Cruelty, as the other for Impurity. This inhuman Species of Idolatry is mentioned first in Way of Prohibition, *Levit. xviii. 21. Thou shalt not let any of thy Seed pass through to Molech.* And *Levit. xx. 2. He that giveth any of his Seed to Molech, he shall surely be put to Death.* And again; *Deut. xviii. 10. There shall not be found among You, any One, that maketh his Son or his Daughter pass thro' THE FIRE.* The Psalmist, in a memorial Song, which might perhaps be composed in the Times of the Judges, when they were in some Captivity, records their idolatrous Behaviour, *Psal. cvi. 37. among many other enormous Crimes, Yea, they sacrificed their Sons and Daughters unto*

DEVILS.

\* *Diod. Sic. Lib. I.* says, that they honoured *γενεσιχον μοριον*, not only in the Image of *Osiris*, but in the Goat of *Mendes*; thereby giving Thanks for the numerous Issue of their Progenitors.

Vid. *Cumb. Sanchon.* p. 69.

† *Cumb. Sanchon.* p. 68.



DEVILS. שְׂדֵימ Schedim to the Destroyers. † And what Deity could be more emphatically called by this Name, than this Monster God, who thirsted for the innocent Blood of helpless Children? They sacrificed them to the Idols of Canaan, to their idolatrous Vexations. לַגְּנָטְזָבִי lagnatzabi from bhatzab excruciat, which Method of Expression illustrates the strong Propriety of the Hebrew Diction, if we could but always trace the Words and Epithets to their Original Sense.

We must observe, that it was a notorious Practice, thro' all the Ages of Jewish Idolatry. Abaz, a soft and weak, but wicked Prince, burnt his Children in the Fire, 2 Chron. xxxviii. 3. So again, the upright Prophet Jeremiah, who knew not the Meanness of flattering profligate Courts, nor the Pusillanimity of conniving at popular Crimes, animadverts upon these execrable Practices, Jer. xix. 2—5. Hear ye the Word of the Lord, O Kings of Judah, and Inhabitants of Jerusalem! — They have built the High Places of Baal, TO BURN THEIR SONS, or Children, WITH FIRE, FOR BURNT OFFERINGS TO BAAL. And here we may note, that they made their Children pass thro' the Fire to Baal, as well as to Molech; and the Place of both these detested Barbarities was in Tophet, the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, as appears from 2 Kings xxiii. 10. compared with this Place. And he, King Josiah, defiled Topheth, which is in the Valley of the Children of Hinnom, That no Man might make his Son or his Daughter to pass thro' the Fire to MOLECH. So that Baal and Molech were two Names for the same Deity, to whom these horrid and nefarious Oblations of Infant-Sacrifices were offered up. And, considering how closely this is connected with the Account of taking away the sacred Horses, which were dedicated to the Sun, and burning the consecrated Chariots of the Sun, with Fire, in the following Verse, 2 Kings xxiii. 11. one may be led to think that Baal and Molech were the Sun, whose stupid and senseless Worship Josiah expunged, in all its silly, as well as wicked Ceremonies; its holy Horses, as well as its sacrificed Infants.

What might be the Original of this execrable Devotion, it is indeed hard to determine. But I should think, that human Sacrifices could not come in, till the Worshipers had conceived some horrid Notions of high Resentment in the Gods, and that they must be appeased by the Oblations of those Things, which were most dear to their Votaries, Micah vi. 7. And these might, perhaps, at first, be offered to the Sun, to appease him upon a Famine, or a Plague, or some other public Calamity, which they ascribed to the sovereign Influences of that Luminary.— But, whether we can account for the Madness of these ancient, veteran, and obstinate Superstitions, or not, it is obvious, from the Texts cited above, that this inhuman Superstition was introduced

\* Tho' this Word be obscure, as Van Dale observes, because the Chaldee Targumists have variously translated it; yet our Critics suppose it may be from the Radix, גָּטַב vastavit. Le Clerc on Deut. xxxii. 17.



introduced early into Canaan; and that it lasted long, and spread wide. It was introduced before Israel came into Canaan; for God warns them, by Moses, against the Practices of Egypt, from whence they came, or Canaan, to which they were going, *Levit. xviii. 3.* and assigns this Reason for that Caution, *Levit. xx. 23. Ye shall not walk in the Manners of the Nations, which I cast out before you; FOR THEY COMMITTED all these Things, therefore I abhorred them.*—And it is alike obvious, that it continued long; for the great Reformer, *Josiah*, near the End of the Monarchy, put an End to it, by ruining the Place of those horrid Solemnities, *2 Kings xxiii. 10.*—And that it was of wide Extent, appears from the Instance of the People of *Sepharvaim*, who had this national Barbarity, of burning their Children to *Adramelech* and *Anamelech*, perhaps to the Sun and Moon, the Gods of *Sepharvaim*, *2 Kings xvii. 31.* which is mentioned among others, in the long Catalogue of Pagan Deities there enumerated. And all Antiquity is full of Accounts of this execrable Practice among the *Phœnicians*, even as far North as *Tyre*, and the Colonies that went from thence. *Sanctioniathon*, as we find by some Fragments preserved by *Eusebius*, \* says, that in the Time of a Plague, or great Mortality, or according to an ancient Custom among Princes, (for both these Reasons are given) *Cronus* offered his only Son by the Nymph *Anobret*, a Burnt-offering to his Father *Ouranus*.—*Plato* in *Min.*† remarks, that, to the Greeks, it appeared an unlawful and impious Practice to sacrifice Men; but that the *Carthaginians* held it not only lawful, but pious, to sacrifice their Sons to *Cronus*, or *Saturn*.

There are other Names of Pagan Deities, mentioned in those early Times of Idolatry, as *Chemosh* and *Milcom* particularly, both which are marked with special Notes of Detestation. *Milcom* and *Molech* were the Abomination of the *Ammonites*; and *Chemosh* the Abomination of the *Moabites*, whose Worship *Solomon* permitted, or encouraged, *1 Kings xi. 5, 7.* These I take to be different Names for the Sun, and perhaps the Moon, in their horrid and impure Theology.—*Molech* and *Milcom* were (probably) the same Deity. This may be gathered both from the Affinity of Sound, and their being the Abominations of the same Country. *Chemosh* *𐤇𐤌𐤔*, being the Abomination of the *Moabites*, was probably either the same with *Baal-Peor*, or similar to him in his polluted *Sacra*; perhaps sacred to the Moon, as the other was to the Sun. *St. Jerome* (on *Isa. xv. 2.*) says, *In Nebo erat Chemosh, Idolum consecratum, quod alio Nomine appellatur Baal-Phegor; that Chemosh was an Idol, otherwise called Baal-Phegor, which was set up in Nebo.* *Vossius* espouses the Opinion of the learned Father, that *Chemosh* was *Peor*, and thinks they were both Names for the Sun, i. e. in Deification. He apprehends both the Words to be of obscene Import, deriving *𐤇𐤌𐤔* from *𐤇* *Servile*, to denote Similitude, and *𐤌𐤓𐤔* *mosh*, *palpavit*.

C c

\* *Præp. Evang. Lib. I. cap. 10.*

† *Ἡμῖν μὲν ὁ νομὸς ἐστὶ ἀνθρώπων θυσίη, ἀλλ' ἀνθρώπων; Καρχηδόνιοι δὲ θύουσιν, ὡς ὄσιον καὶ νομιμὸν ἀνθρώποις, ὕψους τῷ κρονῷ.*



*palpavit.* Others derive it from *חַמָּס* *Chamas*, *occultare*, both, however, signifying, that they referred to Works of Darkness, which the virtuous World would be ashamed of seeing.

There is, I think, an Argument arising from the peculiar Phraseology of the sacred Historians, in speaking of these Idols, which favours this Opinion. That there was something notoriously detestable and immoral in the Worship of *Peor* and *Chemosh*, *Molech* and *Milcom*; for they are each called *Abomination*, *Execration* *שֶׁקֶטֶץ* *Sheketz*, a Word that I do not remember to be applied to any other Idolatry, in all the Old Testament. Now those, who lived at the Time of these Writings being published, knew what the peculiar Worship of *Chemosh* and *Milcom* consisted in, which *Solomon* allowed to be practised, or imitated, so near his Palace; and they might, therefore, perceive the noble Propriety of calling them *Abominations*, or *accursed*, *execrable* Superstitions. The first, *Chemosh*, was, as I conjecture, called *Abomination* from the bestial Impurity of the Rites performed in his obscene *Sacra*; and the latter, *Molech* and *Milcom*, had the like Appellation, from the savage, and inhuman, and execrable Cruelties, practised in his barbarous and sanguinary Superstitions.

This is another Instance of the Propriety of the *Hebrew Diction*; where, perhaps, many Words were used peculiarly expressive of the Things signified by them.

#### S E C T. IV.

##### On the Groves.

ONE Thing more remains to be spoke to, upon the Old Testament Accounts of the Ancient, Oriental Idolatry, viz. *the Groves* and *High Places* in which their Worship was performed. We have an History of the first Degeneracy of the *Israelites*, *Judges* iii. 7. when, upon their ensnaring Intermarriages with the Remnant of the Natives, they served *Baalim*, and the *Groves*, *אֲשֵׁרֹת* *Asheroth*; which seems most naturally to be understood of the Idols which were set up in the *Groves*.\* This Word, indeed, in the singular Number, has the feminine Form, or Termination *אֲשֵׁרָה* *Asherah*, in the *Hebrew*; but there are two Plurals, which seem to come from it, *Asherim* and *Asheroth*. And there seems to be a general Rule for interpreting these Words. *Asherah*, and *Asheroth* commonly, if not always, signify the Grove, or Groves, in which the Idol was set up; and in which the Worship was performed. But *Asherim* *אֲשֵׁרִים* the masculine Plural, generally signifies the Statues, or Idols, Columns, or other Symbols, which were set up in the Groves.—In the first Instance, it is very clear; as *Deut.* xvi. 21. “Thou shalt

\* *Van Dale de Origin. Idol.* p. 22.



“Thalt not plant thee a Grove of any Trees near the Altar of the Lord thy God. *Asherah*.” So also, *Judges* vi. 25, 28. “Gideon is commanded to throw down the Altar of *Baal*, which his Father had, and cut down the Grove *Asherah*, which was by it, and offer a Burnt-offering with the Wood of the Grove which he should cut down. And the Men of the City soon observed, that the Altar was overthrown, and the Grove, which was by it, cut down.” And, *1 Kings* xv. 13. “*Asa* deposed *Maacah*, the Queen-Mother, because she had made an Idol in a Grove, *Leasherah*.” Here the Idol is distinguished from the Grove in which it was erected. And *Asheroth*, in the feminine Plural, is but rarely met with. As to the second Instance, *Asherim*, in the masculine Plural Termination being to be understood of the Idols set up in the Groves, I shall refer first to those Places, in which the Word can’t well be taken for the Groves themselves; as in *1 Kings* xiv. 23. the Children of *Judah*, in *Rehoboam*’s weak Reign, built (or erected) them high Places, and Images, and Groves, *Asherim*, on every high Hill, and under every green Tree.—Again, in enumerating those Abominations, which at last terminated in the Captivity of the ten Tribes, *2 Kings* xvii. 10. It is said, They set them up Images and Groves, *Asherim*, in every high Hill, and under every green Tree; which Practice, *Jeremiah* plainly refers to, *Jer.* xvii. 2. their Children remember their Altars and their Groves, *Asherim*, by the green Trees, upon the high Hills. Now these *Asherim* must be some kind of Images, or Symbols of the false God, which they could set up under every green Tree; for they could not be said to set Groves under every green Tree, with any Propriety; since every Grove must consist of green Trees.—There are also some Places, in which the Words will not agree to the Plantation of Groves; but will very well suit to the setting up, and consecrating Images, in the Groves. As, *2 Chron.* xxxiii. 19. where, speaking of that profligate Monarch, *Manasseh*, the Historian says, he set up Groves and graven Images, before he was humbled. Now these Groves, which he set up, were *Asherim*.—There are two Texts where both the masculine and feminine Plural are made use of, which assert the same Thing concerning both, *Judges* iii. 7. the Children of *Israel* served *Baalim*, and the Groves [*Haasheroth*.] and *2 Chron.* xxiv. 18. And they left the House of the Lord God of their Fathers, and served Groves and Idols, [*Haasherim*.] Now these Texts must explain each other; for, in both, it is said, that they served the Groves; which sure must mean the Gods, which were resident, by their Images, in the Groves. There is yet another Text that has some Difficulty, *2 Kings* xxiii. 6. and King *Josiah* brought out the Grove [*Asherah*,] from the House of the Lord, unto the Brook *Kidron*, and burnt it there, and stamped it small to Powder. Now here we cannot understand Grove, but either as an Image that belonged to some Grove; or some Model, Temple, or Tabernacle, that was set up. For Groves could not grow in the Temple, or be easily removed to the Brook *Kidron* to be burnt: Except in these few Places,



Places, the singular Name means the Grove, in which they worshipped; and the Plural expresses the Idols, Statues, or Columns, which were visible Symbols of the Deity, whom they worshipped. And this Account agrees to the Description of the most ancient Idolatry by *Heathen Writers*.—And thus, I hope, I have illustrated and confirmed, from the *Hebrew History*, the general Description already given, both as to the Objects of the earliest *Pagan Worship*, the *Sydereal Gods*; and their honouring them, by Pillars and sacred Groves. And this I take to have been the second Addition to *Idolatry*. When they had deified the heavenly Bodies, they soon after erected some Sort of little Columns, or Pillars of Wood or Stone, to their Honour, as a Pledge of the special Presence of their Gods; and dedicated to them Groves, and the retired Heights of Mountains, in which they paid their Worship. And, doubtless, varied their Rites in different Places, according to their several Humours; tho' generally, with unspeakable Absurdity in most of them.

## C H A P. XIV.

*On the Worship of Brute Images.*

**A**NOTHER Addition to *Pagan Idolatry* was the Worship of the *Sydereal Gods*, under *Brute Images*. It has been always thought a Difficulty to determine the Date of this Species of *Idolatry*, as well as the true Reasons for it; though, as I have frequently observed, there were, doubtless, some pretended Reasons for setting up every new Superstition. — I have no doubt, but that the heavenly Luminaries continued, thro' all the Periods of *Paganism*, to be the chief Objects of their Veneration. But how all the monstrous Worship of *Egypt* arose, as to consecrated Animals, holy Insects, Worms and Reptiles, sacred Plants, Roots and Herbs, which occasioned so much Severity of *Satire*, even among the *Heathen Poets* themselves, is an hard Problem to resolve.

*O Sanctas Gentes! quibus hæc nascuntur in Hortis numina.*—Juv. Sat.

How they arose, or when, I have not found made out to Satisfaction, by any learned Men. But as the *Pagan Writers*, in general, all ascribe the Original of it to *Egypt*; we shall consider what Lights the History of that Kingdom, in the Books of *Moses*, will afford us in this Enquiry.



## S E C T. I.

*The only authentic ancient History of Egypt is in the Pentateuch.*

**I**T must I think be laid down as a Foundation, that the only authentic History of ancient *Egypt* is in the *Pentateuch*. And there are three Periods of it.

1. That Period when *Abram* was there.

2. That of *Joseph's* Residence there.

3. That of *Moses's* Time.

And, as to the first Period, when *Abram* was there, what is related, *Gen. xii.* gives us no very unlovely Idea of *Egyptian* Manners in that Age. It appears, indeed, to have been a regular Kingdom, and the Monarch had considerable State; his Court was attended with Men of Figure, who were called the *Princes of Pharaoh*. But there are no Traces of any gross Superstitions among them. The King himself seems to have had a lively Sense both of Piety and Honour. He was tender and obsequious, under the divine Visitations, with which his House was afflicted; and he avows a strict Regard to the Laws of Morality and Equity; so that he would use no Acts of Power, even against a friendless Stranger, who came for Relief under the Extremity of a Famine. Here are all the Marks of an honest, generous, worthy Man. It may, indeed, be gathered from the Story, that *Polygamy* had then prevailed in *Egypt*; for *Pharaoh* owns, that he might, perhaps, have taken her to Wife, but disdains the Imputation of *Adultery*; so that it appears to have been a virtuous Court, in all other Respects, but that of *Polygamy*. It is plain, there had been much Discourse about *Sarah*. Both the Populace and the Princes took Notice of her singular Beauty; which occasioned her being so much caressed. *Pharaoh* himself apprehended her to be *Abram's* Sister; and remonstrates with him for deceiving him, in all the Spirit of Religion, for doing what might have led the King into a Snare, contrary to his own honourable Intentions.

And there is nothing in *Sarah's* Age to discredit this Story. The King might have several Wives; and so one of remarkable Beauty, tho' of some Disparity of Years, might engage the King's Passion; or *Pharaoh*, at that Time, might have no Queen, and his own Age might render her very suitable for the Royal Bed, for *Moses* says nothing to the contrary. Finally, the Manner of dismissing *Abram* has much Gentleness in it. There appears no harsh Resentment for his insidious Usage, for he sent him away with all that he had. *Pharaoh's* Behaviour was that of a religious, virtuous Man.

2. The Period of *Joseph's* Residence doth not appear much worse than that of *Abram*, either as to Religion or Morals. In the whole Transaction of interpreting the King's Dreams, there are plain Marks of the Belief in One supreme



preme God, in the *Egyptian* Court.—*Joseph*, when addressing himself to *Pharaoh*, speaks as a Believer, *Gen. xli. 16. God shall shew Pharaoh an Answer of Peace* [אלהים יענה Elobim jabaneh. Deus respondebit.] And *ver. 25. God hath shewed Pharaoh what He is about to do.* [אלהים חנן Haelobim higgid. Deus nuntiavit.] So *ver. 33. the Thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.* As also, *ver. 28. what God is about to do, he sheweth unto Pharaoh.* In all these Places, tho' *Elobim* be a plural Noun, yet it is uniformly used with singular Verbs; so that *Joseph* was always speaking to *Pharaoh* of One God: And this, as the Disposer of all Events;—it was established by God, He would bring it to pass.—And then, when *Pharaoh* himself comes to speak of the Interpretation, both to *Joseph*, and to his own Court, the same Strain of Piety and Reverence for God ran thro' the whole Discourse, *ver. 38, 39. And Pharaoh said unto his Servants, Can we find such a One as this, a Man in whom the Spirit of God is.* And *Pharaoh said unto Joseph, forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this,* חנן אליו Hodiang Elobim, Deus cognoscere fecit. Here *Pharaoh* himself makes use of a singular Verb, applied to God, as *Joseph* had done before; and this must be the One supreme God, for the *Egyptians* knew nothing of the God of *Abraham*, as distinct from the supreme God. It is therefore (I think) both bold and injudicious Criticism in the learned *Monsieur Le Clerc*, tho' an excellent Critic, to change the Idea of the same Word, in the same Train of Discourse, when nothing in any one Sentence requires it, and when some are made almost Nonfense by his attempting to amend the Version. Thus, *ver. 38. Le Clerc* says, "That this being the Language of an Idolater, the Spirit of God is in him, must be translated the Spirit of the Gods is in Him; tho' it be Elobim, the Word that has been used with a singular Verb, in all the preceding Discourse." And, for the same Reason, that Saying of *Pharaoh* to *Joseph, ver. 39. forasmuch as GOD HATH SHEWED thee all this,* must be understood thus, "Forasmuch as One of the Gods hath shewed thee;" for which Manner of Speaking there is not the least Foundation; and the Illustration is very forced and unnatural. We are not to interpret ancient Writers by modern Prejudices. That which might be proper Language in the Court of *Nebuchadnezzar*, was not so in *Pharaoh's*. I should rather conclude, from this authentic ancient Passage, that a gross and senseless Polytheism (as all Polytheism is senseless) had not at that Time advanced so far in *Egypt*. Idolatry was not so absurd a Thing in its Beginning, as it was one thousand Years after its Introduction. How little did human Learning mend Religion?—I do not, indeed, deny, but there might be some subordinate Worship of the Sydereal Gods; for it was in *Chaldea* before *Abram's* Migration. But then, on the other hand, it cannot be proved, that it had been introduced into *Egypt*, at the Period we are speaking of. And, if it was, it had not destroyed the Notion of one supreme Deity, tho' it might have a little obscured it.—In this whole Transaction, there appears to have been a Sense of the Being of One supreme God, at that Time,



in *Egypt*; and of all public Benefits and Judgments being under the Direction and Controul of his Providence. And, if there was such a Degree of Religious Knowledge, at the Beginning of *Joseph's* Administration, it would not be like to grow much worse, at least about the Court, while that pious, and able, and excellent Governour lived.

3. We now come to that Period of the *Egyptian* Story, the Days of *Moses*. And it is obvious, (1.) That the *Egyptian* Court was much more impious and profane, as well as wicked and immoral, in the Days of *Moses*, than in those either of *Abram* or *Joseph*. It was hospitable and gentle to *Abram*, kind and generous to *Joseph*; but cruel and barbarous to the whole Nation in *Moses's* Days. And, as to their Religion, the *Pharaoh* of *Moses* speaks like an ignorant, blind, profligate Idolater, *Exod. v. 1, 2*. "*Who is the Lord? I know not the Lord, Jehovah*; neither will I let *Israel* go." There's no such Language in the *Pharaoh* of *Abram*, or *Joseph*. He speaks like one that had almost, or entirely, lost the Notion of One supreme God; and confided in his own national Gods, and had no Apprehension of any Gods more potent than the Gods of *Egypt*; and it appears, that those were then greatly multiplied, *Exod. xii. 12*. *On all the Gods of Egypt will I execute Judgment*. And, indeed, the incurable Obstinacy of this merciless and impious Tyrant, seems best to be accounted for, on his idolatrous Principles of *Polytheism*; he so confided in his own Gods, that he defied the Lord *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*. It could not be an atheistic Contempt of God in general, which is an unexampled Case in any idolatrous Country we read of; for, tho' they might despise foreign Gods, yet each revered their own national Gods.—Thus *Pharaoh* feared not the One true God, but only his *Egyptian* Idols; and the Lord hardened his Heart, i. e. He left him to act on those absurd, polytheistic Principles, which naturally operated to harden him against the Convictions, which those astonishing Miracles would otherwise have produced. He still hardened his Heart, in Expectation, that his brutal Deities would have exerted their Power, at last, in his Rescue. And it is not probable, that he would ever have mended; for his Religion ruined him, and his People with him.

This is not a Notion inconsistent with later *Paganism*. It was *Apollo* in *Homer*, who sent the Plague into the *Grecian* Camp; only *Pharaoh's* Conduct was different from that of the *Grecian* Heroes; they propitiated *Apollo*; whereas, tho' the God of *Israel* sent the Plagues on *Egypt*, *Pharaoh* did not propitiate him, but hardened himself, in Hopes that his own Gods could, and would at last interpose in his Behalf.

2.) It is very plain from *Moses*, that before the Egression of *Israel*, there had prevailed in *Egypt*, the Worship of some God under the Image of an Ox, Cow, or Calf; because, soon after their Coming out, they set up the Golden Calf, in Imitation of it. And, as we find that other neighbouring Nations, particularly the *Amorites* on the East, worshipped the Sun and Moon, about



that Age of the World; we have no Reason to question their doing the same in *Egypt*. And, therefore, one would think that these *Brute Images* were set up as superstitious Symbols of the Sun and Moon. But how they came to take them for any proper Symbols of the heavenly Luminaries, I own, I can't conceive; nor is it accounted for, by any Writer I have seen, to Satisfaction. — There is no Emblem of *Beauty, Dignity, and Grandeur*, to signify any thing parallel to what their Neighbours meant by *Baal* and *Molech*; no Emblem of *Activity, Sagacity, Authority, or Rule*. A *Cow, or Calf*, are mean Things in Appearance, however useful. The learned Author of the *Divine Legation of Moses*, chuses to explain the Origin of this symbolic Worship, from their ancient symbolical Writings, or hieroglyphic Characters of Things. But it is as difficult to account for their making Use of that Symbol of a *Cow, or Calf*, in Writing, to express Ideas fit to be applied to God; as it is to account for it in their Worship. And, as it yet remains, at least dubious, whether there was any hieroglyphic Writing so early, so it is hard to conceive how it should be so much confined to *Egypt*, as it plainly was, had it been of such considerable Use as it is represented, in this learned Gentleman's Account of it.\*

## S E C T. II.

*The Original of Brute Worship from Egypt.*

1. **N**OW the Worship of Brute Images, as well as of the Animals themselves, is represented, by the *Ancients* in general, to have been peculiar to *Egypt*, or such as derived it from thence. Thus *Herodotus, Lib. 2. c. 65.* discourses copiously of this as an *Egyptian Custom*, and adds, "That tho' *Egypt* doth not much abound in Beasts, yet they hold almost all they have sacred." *Diodorus Siculus* gives a large Account of their Worship of a great Variety of Beasts; their feeding them, while alive, with great Care and Expence; their Bodies being inviolate, so that it was Capital to kill them; and that their Burial was costly, when they died.† *Cicero* speaks of this *Egyptian Practice* philosophically, *De Natura Deorum*. The *Egyptians* consecrated almost every Species of Beasts, and did not confine themselves to Bulls or Goats. And, to add no more, *Juvenal*, as a Poet, remarks upon the same *Egyptian Custom*, with the Severity of a Satyrist.

Quis nescit qualia demens

Ægyptus portenta colit? Crocodilon adorant

Pars hæc; Illa pavet Saturnum Serpentibus Ibin:

Effigies Sacri nitet Aurea Cercopitheci.

Illic Cæruleos, hic Piscem fluminis; illic

Oppida tota Cænem venerantur. — *Juven. Sat. 15.*

But,

\* Vid. Warburton, Vol. II. p. 166.

† *Diod. Sic. Lib. I. c. 6.*



But, I think, none of the Ancients come up to the *Original* of *Brute* Worship, in any Distinction of *Time* and Order of Succession, except *Moses*. For he chiefly takes Notice of the Worship of *Brute* Images; and, therefore, I conclude, that this was, in Order of *Time*, the first introduced; whereas, all these later Writers celebrate the stupid Custom of adoring the Beasts themselves, and take less Notice of their Images, which I suppose, in the Progress of this Idolatry, went more out of Use.

2. However, it appears, by all Antiquity, that this was an *Egyptian* Superstition. And yet other Nations had *Ancestors* among them, who were famous for Improvements in Husbandry, and other useful Arts, as well as the *Egyptians*. And, therefore, if *Osiris* and *Isis* were consecrated, or deified, on account of their beneficial *Inventions*, other Nations might have the like Deifications of their national *Benefactors*. And they had also their *useful* Animals, which might have been Symbols, under which they worshipped their *Benefactors*; as the Horse, the Camel, the Sheep, the Fish, according to the different Produce of their Country. But of these Symbols, of the Animal or Vegetable Kind, we hear nothing, in any other Countries. But, as I see no Reason to believe that there were as yet any *Hero Gods* in *Egypt*, or any other Deities but the Sydereal Ones, and perhaps the Earth and Elements; therefore the *Memorial* of *Osiris's* Improvements in *Tillage*, cannot be the *Original* of this Symbol of the Ox, Cow, or Calf, under which he was worshipped, upon his Canonization.

### SECT. III.

#### *The Source of the Worship of the Images of Bulls and Cows, from Pharaoh's Dream.*

I SHALL, therefore, attempt to explain the *Original* of this Symbol in their Worship, the Image of the *Cow*, or *Calf*, from the Writings of *Moses*; and which I take to have been consecrated to the Sun and Moon.

1. It is probable, that *Pharaoh's* memorable Dream laid the Foundation for this Superstition; tho' I suppose it did not take Place till some Years after.—In that Dream were predicted two very extraordinary Events, seven Years of Plenty, and seven Years of Famine; and these Events were prefigured by two very apt Emblems, seven fat Kine, and seven lean Ones. Now this prophetic Dream would be in every body's Mouth, during those fourteen Years, but especially the seven last; where the Calamities they felt would engage a general Attention, and fix in their Minds the Pertinency of the Emblems by which those Events were represented. JOSEPH lived among them, both in Splendor of Fortune, and in the highest Veneration and Credit,



for above sixty Years after : He must, by his illustrious Alliance, be related to several of the greatest Families, particularly to the *Priests*, who were all noble. This must occasion the divine Admonition by the King's Dream to be often spoke of, and it must be familiarly known for a considerable Time after the Event.

As *Joseph* was an eminently pious Man, there could be no great Danger of the Advances of Superstition, during his Time of Authority. Nor could he be supposed, when retired from Business, to encourage any undue Honour to himself, to the Dishonour of God. But, perhaps, at his Death, they might celebrate his public Virtues in every respectful Manner they could think of. This must not only be agreeable to the King and the great Families he was allied to, by Marriage ; but *Joseph's* Government was so mild, and he shut up his Commission with such a generous Act, in determining the Property of all *Egypt*, that these Honours done to him, must be as agreeable to the *Plebeians*, as to the Nobles and the Court. They might, perhaps, erect a Statue to his Memory, and borrow this Emblem of the *Cow*, which was made use of, in the prophetic Dream, as most apt to commemorate his public Virtues. \*— But, in a little Time, when a King arose that had not the same Respect for *Joseph's* Memory ; they might, by growing Superstition, transfer that Image of the *Cow* to a sacred Use. They might consider it as an apt Emblem of Plenty, and so consecrate it to the God of Plenty, that is, to *the Sun*, as especially presiding over the fruitful Year, made so by his prolific Beams. And, as Kine were the Symbols both of Plenty and Famine in the Dream, so they might worship *the Sun*, under this Symbol, as the Cause of both, to pray for the one, and to deprecate the other.

2. And this Original of *Brute Images* will pretty well account for all Difficulties in this Enquiry ; it will explain how it came to be *peculiar to Egypt*, these Emblems being used in an *Egyptian* Prophecy ; and it will explain how it came not to be used any where else ; because they had no such Animal Symbols in any national Revelations. It is very likely, that this Symbol should come into great Honour among them, because it had been so publicly honoured in the Royal Revelation ; and it might very well be taken for an apt Symbol of Plenty, because it had been made use of to represent it in the Dream ; and then it was an easy Transition, in the Abuses of growing Superstition, to consecrate this Image of the *Cow*, as an apt Symbol of the God of Plenty, *the Sun* ; and thus it might be *first* introduced into the *Egyptian* Idolatry.

3. But it is highly incredible to suppose, if it had been introduced *before*, that the great God of the Universe should chuse to impart his *own* Revelations to them, under such *Emblems*, as were *sacred* to their *Idol Gods before*, and continued to be known Symbols of them, at *that Time*. It seems to be

\* A Story of this Kind is related by the Author of *Scriptura Mirabilium*, ascribed to St. *Austin*, and quoted by *Witsius*, in *Egyptiaca*, p. 61.



giving their false Gods too much Honour, to set forth his own heavenly Monitions, by those polluted and defecrated Symbols, which were prostituted to *Superstition*.—This would naturally have been a great Confirmation of their false Religion, and have caused all of them to ascribe this Prediction to *Osiris*, or *Isis*, or *Baal*. So that had any Deity, either Sydereal, or Hero God, been worshipped at that Time in *Egypt*, under the Image of the Cow or Calf, there would have been no divine Prediction under that Symbol. I therefore conclude, that there was no Brute Worship in *Egypt* before, and that *This* was the Rise of that Superstition. They took the Hint from the prophetic Symbol in the Royal Dream, to venerate the Image of this Animal. And, as the principal Wealth of *Egypt* consisted in Corn, and as the Ox was the chief Animal employed in Agriculture, they might easily fall into the Practice of Worshipping the Sun and Moon, under this Symbol of Industry and Plenty. But I think *Osiris* and *Isis*, are Names of a later Date. They might have Names in Deification for these Luminaries, in their own Language, of like Import with *Baal* or *Molech*, among their Neighbours. But as all Writing in *Egypt*, was after *Osiris* and *Isis* were deified, those Names prevailed in all Pagan Antiquity. And we should have known nothing of *Ashteroth*, *Molech*, *Chemosh*, or *Baal-Peor*, but for the Hebrew Antiquaries, any more than we do of the ancient *Egyptian* Names of their Gods, which seem to be now lost.

4. It is plain, from the Writings of the Hebrew Lawgiver, that the *Egyptians* had, before the *Exodus* of *Israel*, introduced the Images of other Animals, besides the Bull or Cow, into Use in their Superstitions. For thus the first Commandment runs: “Thou shalt have no other Gods before me, or in my Presence.” Not the Sydereal Gods, which the *Egyptians* worshipped, and to whom they dedicated any Images, of any kind.

The Second Commandment is express and copious, in the Prohibition of Images. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven Image, or any Likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or that is in the Earth beneath, or that is in the Water under the Earth.” They were punctually to abstain from the Use of any Images in religious Worship, or as any Symbol of any Deity. Not only the Images of the Bull and Cow, which might, perhaps, be the graven Images of greatest Art and Expence; but also the Images of any other Animals, as Fowls, Fishes, or Reptiles, Things in Heaven, Earth, or Seas.

Now it is reasonable to suppose, that these superstitious Fooleries were then begun in *Egypt*, because they were so particularly cautioned against them; and the People had a corrupt Proclivity to imitate all these veteran Absurdities, which made these Prohibitions necessary.—The renewed Exhortation, *Deut.* iv. 15, 16, 17, 18. may be considered as a good Explication of the Decalogue, and as containing a Summary of all the Superstitions then introduced into *Egyptian* Worship. “Take ye, therefore, good Heed unto yourselves;



“ for ye saw no manner of Similitude, on the Day that God spoke to you in  
 “ *Horeb*, out of the midst of the Fire ; lest you corrupt yourselves, and  
 “ make a *graven Image*, the Similitude of *Male or Female*,” i. e. any thing  
 resembling the Bull or Cow, which were so familiar to them, and which were  
 perhaps the most pompous of all their Idols ; because their Imitation of them  
 was Golden. Again ; *Moses* adds, “ Lest you make the Likeness of any Beast  
 “ that is on the Earth ; *the Earth beneath*. The Likeness of any winged  
 “ Fowl, that flieth in the Air, *in the Heaven above* ; the Likeness of any  
 “ Thing that creepeth on the Ground ; the Likeness of any Fish, that is in  
 “ the Waters *beneath the Earth*. And lest thou lift up thine Eyes unto Hea-  
 “ ven, and when thou seest the Sun, and the Moon, and the Stars, even all  
 “ the Host of Heaven, shouldest be driven to worship them.” Now, in this  
 Exhortation, we have a direct Warning against Sydereal Worship, which the  
 first Commandment seems to be levelled against ; and also, the Worship of va-  
 rious Images of Animals, Beasts, Fowls, Fishes, and Reptiles, against which  
 the Second is pointed.

I have endeavoured to account for the Introduction of one Species of *Brute*  
 Images, that of the Bull and Cow, the most pompous, golden Gods of *Egypt*.  
 And, when they had once consecrated one Brute Image, at first, on account  
 of the Dream, they might then contemplate the Pertinency of the Symbol of  
 Plenty, in this most useful Animal. And now, different Fancies coming into  
 their Heads, and Superstition being a very fruitful Thing, they might think  
 of consecrating many other Animals, as well as the *Cow or Calf* ; and find out  
 some Sort of imaginary Reasons for each, which it is impossible now to trace  
 up to so distant an Original. Perhaps, *Fear* produced the Consecration of  
 noxious Animals, as *Gratitude* those of the useful Kind, and inexplicable Whim  
 those of the mixed Kind. *Diodorus Siculus* frequently mentions it, and assigns  
 different Reasons for their *Brute* Worship. As, “ That the Gods, being in  
 “ Difficulties by the Numbers and Impiety of Men, transformed themselves  
 “ into different Beasts ; and so concealed, avoided the Insults of Men. Others  
 “ ascribe this Custom to the first Invention of Standards, that the *Egyptian*  
 “ Armies being before irregular, made Standards, with the Pictures of differ-  
 “ ent Beasts, which improved their Military Order so much, that they be-  
 “ came Victorious, and afterwards worshipped those Beasts,” See him more  
 at large, *Lib. 1. cap. 6.*

*Plutarch* labours to defend these Absurdities of *Egyptian* Idolatry, by all the  
 plausible Representations of it he can invent. Thus he says, \* “ That there  
 “ is nothing in their sacred Institutions, which is irrational, or fabulous, or su-  
 “ perstitious, as some alledge ; but that some of them have moral and very  
 “ useful Causes, and the others comprehend several historical or natural Ele-  
 “ gancies.” But what *Plutarch*, and all those modern *Apologists* for *Paganism*  
 alledge, is probably the Invention of later Times ; and after the original Occa-  
 sion

\* *Plutarch de Isid. & Osir.*



sion of the worshipping the Images of Brute Animals in *Egypt*, was entirely lost and forgot, both the Bull, and Cow, and all the rest.

But, however, these Images of Animals were multiplied, and by whatever superstitious and fanciful Reasoning they were introduced; against all Imitations of them, the *Israelites* were punctually and clearly warned by *Moses*. And he lays down one Argument particularly proper for them, *Deut. iv. 15.* *Ye saw no Similitude on the Day the Lord spoke to you in Horeb*, when God appeared in the *Shechinah*, or Habitation of God, it was with no Shape, but in an unfigured Flame, or visible Glory, in a Mixture of shapeless Light and Shades, which afforded them no Pattern to imitate in any Image; as Dr. *Scot* expresses it.

5. We may gather, from the same Way of arguing, that they had not introduced the Worship of any living Animal into the *Egyptian Sacra*, at that Time. They had no *Apis* at *Memphis*, nor *Mnevis*, nor at *Heliopolis*, as the *Pagan Writers* assert, which they held sacred as a living Deity. For, since the divine Legislator is so particular in enumerating, in the Prohibition, every Sort of Image of Things in Heaven, and Earth, Air, and Water, we cannot doubt but there would have been Notice taken of the *sacred Animals*, as well as their *Images*, had that Superstition, of worshipping any living Animals, been at that Time set up.—But learned Men, finding the Accounts of their *sacred Beasts*, among the most ancient Customs of their Religion; and then, thro' an Inaccuracy in Chronology, raising their Antiquities much too high, have been deceived into great Errors, as to the Dates of their Superstitions; but a critical Attention to *Moses*, the only ancient Writer of *Egyptian Affairs*, would easily rectify them.

The Idolatry of *sacred Animals*, was not begun in the Days of *Moses*; but it was begun before the Days of the next *Egyptian Antiquary*, *Herodotus*; for he mentions *Apis*, on several Occasions; but particularly that of *Cambyse's* mortally wounding this sacred Bull.\*

After *Herodotus*, during all the ensuing Ages of *Paganism*, this Story of *sacred Animals*, particularly *Apis*, was familiar. Thus *Cicero*, *Pliny*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo*, *Mela*, and *Marcellinus*, all speak of it. And modern Writers have in general followed them, except the *learned Author of the Divine Legation of Moses*,† who clearly asserts our Proposition, and assigns the same Reason. There is, indeed, one Text (*Exod. viii. 26.*) which seems to have some Reference to this Matter. *Moses* gives this Reason to *Pharaoh*, against the *Israelites* sacrificing in *Egypt*; that they should give them unsupportable Offence, by *sacrificing the Abomination of Egypt before their Eyes*. Now this must either mean, that they should offend the *Egyptians*, by sacrificing what they some way held *sacred*; and then it would be the *sacrificing*, not the *Things sacrificed*, which was their *Abomination*: Or otherwise, the Things which the *Egyptians* revered were called, for that Reason, *Abomination*, as

*Moses*:

\* *Herod. Lib. 3. cap. 28.*

† *Vol. II. p. 169,*



Moses did not here use any Language of Compliment; and then it may mean, that they would sacrifice Cows and Goats, and perhaps Sheep, which were to the Hebrews the Egyptian Abominations, because their Images were abused to Superstition. It is certain, the Cows were, witness the Golden Calf; and it is probable, the Goats also were worshipped in their Images, for they had sacrificed to Goats before, Lev. xvii. 7. And the Image of the Goat might as well be worshipped with some abominable Rites in Egypt in that Age, as Baal Peor was in Canaan about the same Time. And, besides, they might hold those Animals in some Sense sacred, so as to be offended with sacrificing them; tho' they had not yet begun to worship the Animals themselves. They might worship their Image, as Symbols of some Properties of the Sydereal Gods, or Benefits derived from them; as the Image of the Sheep, as an apt Symbol of Plenty in the Flocks and Wool; the Cow, as a Symbol of Plenty in Corn; and the Goat, as the Emblem of their industry, and in Gratitude for the Proliferousness of their Country.

## CHAPTER XV.

### On Hero Gods.

**NOW** come to enquire into the Original of the last Addition to the enormous System of Pagan Superstition, that of Hero Gods, or deifying mortal Men.

As Superstition is an unsatisfying Thing, and never can shut up all the Avenues, by which Doubts, Fears, and Horrors may enter, to invade the Heart; nor can Men rest in long Composure, when they put their Trust in finite Gods; so, as I have observed already, they must have frequent Recourse to new Expedients. After they had deified the Luminaries of Heaven, as the great Servants of the supreme God, they, some Time after, set up little Columns or Pillars, and consecrated Groves and Places of Devotion, to affect themselves the more with these sensible Representations, and to have a sort of Pledge of the Presence of their Gods.—Afterwards, the Egyptians set up the Images of various Animals, to be some way, as they thought, more pleasing and honourable Symbols of the Sydereal Gods, and their different Properties. They had, indeed, in the first Instance, that of consecrating the Image of the Cow, some Foundation for the Representation; yet they afterwards even wearied themselves with new Inventions of Superstition, in consecrating all the Monsters of the Nile, and almost every kind of Vermin that their Climate produced. And, after all, they were not satisfied. They either had not Gods enough to take Care of all their Affairs; or considered the Luminaries as too general Gods, who by their Influences reached to all alike; and so they



they at last came to *Hero Gods*, and deified their Kings, Generals, Legislators, and other public Benefactors to their Country, out of Gratitude; or their Tyrants, by their own Authority, and impious Edicts for Canonization. And I take the last to be the Truth.—I am sensible, that learned Men have been generally of Opinion, that the *Apotheosis* of their Heroes was of a more ancient Date. And even those, who bring down the Practice of actually deifying dead Men, to the lower Ages of Superstition; yet suppose that these *Hero Gods* were some of their *Antediluvian* Ancestors, whose Crimes were then forgot, and whose Virtues were mellowed into Admiration by Time. This is the Opinion of the learned Dr. Shuckford.\* The ingenious Author owns, indeed, that no other Nations worshipped *Hero Gods*, so soon as the *Egyptians*; and that they did not introduce that Practice, till about the Time of Rectifying their Year, and that they found, that it consisted of 365 Days.

The most celebrated *Hero Gods* were *Chronus*, *Rhea*, *Osiris*, *Orus*, *Typhon*, *Isis*, and *Nephthe*. And *Plutarch* relates a remarkable Fable, concerning the Birth of five of these Gods, (in *Lib. de Iside & Osiride*). They say, “That *Rhea* lay privately with *Saturn*, and was with Child by him; but the Sun, upon finding out her Baseness, laid a Curse upon her, that she should not be delivered in any Month or Year: That *Mercury* being in Love with the Goddess, lay with her also; and then play’d at Dice with the Moon, and won from her, the 72d Part of each Day, and made up of these Winnings, five Days, which he added to the Year, making the Year to consist of 365 Days, which before consisted of 360 Days only, and that in these Days, *Rhea* brought forth five Children, *Osiris*, *Orus*, *Typho*, *Isis*, and *Nephthe*.” What our learned Author infers from this Fable, is, that it could not be invented before the *Egyptians* had found out, that the Year consisted of 365 Days; and consequently, that these five Deities, said to be born on the five *επαυρημεναι*, or additional Days, were not deified, before they discovered that the Year had these five Days added to it.—Our Author remarks further, that the *Egyptians* had other *Hero Gods*, besides these five. They had eight Persons, whom their *Chronology* called *Demigods*, whose Names *Diodorus* gives; *Sol*, *Saturn*, *Rhea*, *Jupiter*, *Juno*, *Vulcan*, *Vesta*, *Mercury*. And their History affirms, that these Persons reigned in *Egypt*, before *Menes*; and therefore, before the Flood. And they had, after these, a Race of *Heroes*, fifteen in Number. These we have been speaking of, being five of them, and these likewise must have been *Antediluvians*.

But it is not reasonable to suppose, that they could have any History of the *Antediluvian Egyptian* Princes, when only the three Sons of *Noah* were preserved from the Deluge; and when it is also probable, that they must have been bred near the Place, where the Ark was built; because it was not of a Figure or Model for a long Navigation; and we know where it rested, and also what Wood it was made of, *Gopher*, or *Cypress* Wood, which grew about *Mesopotamia*.

\* *Connexion of Sacred and Prophane History*, Vol. II. p. 286.



*mesopotamia*. Nor (further) can it be supposed, that they, who had *nothing* of Concern with the *Egyptian* Monarchy, *before* the Flood, should relate any thing about its Monarchs, which should lay any Foundation for such an *Apotheosis*, so many Ages *after*. It seems to me also, that our learned Author dates the Original of the Deification too high, in fixing about the Death of *Joshua*, (p. 284.) the Addition of the five Days. All will, as I apprehend, agree much better with the Age of *Shishbar*; which, I hope, I shall be able to make out, when we come to that Part of the History of the World.

## S E C T. I.

## Hero Gods not before the Giving of the Law.

WE may pretty satisfactorily determine this Matter, as to the Beginning of *Hero Worship*, from *Moses* himself, who is the only ancient, authentic *Egyptian* Historian; at least we may determine it negatively, that it was not begun before his Time; and that there was no Worship of dead Men deified before the Giving of the Law, either in *Egypt*, or in *Canaan*; for *Moses* warns the *Israelites*, not only against the Gods of *Egypt*, from whence they were withdrawing; but against the Gods of *Canaan*, whither they were going.

I here make use of the same Argument, which I made use of in the Case preceding. I concluded, that there was no Animal Worship at that Time; because there was no Prohibition of it. And, for the same Reason, I conclude, that there was *no Hero Worship* of any Kind, either of Antediluvian, or any other Ancestors, in *Egypt*, or any of the *Canaanitish* Nations, because there is no Hint of a Prohibition of it, or Reproof for it, or Warning against it: Whereas, had this most impudent of all Superstitions been then born, there would have been all these most punctual and explicit.—This was a Species of *Idolatry*, which the Pride of Great Men, and the Flattery of those about them, and a national Vanity, would all conspire to promote; and an Evil so great in itself, and so infectious and catching, would (doubtless) have been remonstrated against, with all due Plainness and Severity by the *Hebrew* Prophet and Lawgiver; had it been, at that Time, broached, either in *Egypt*, or any other neighbouring *Pagan* Nation.

There can be only these Suppositions made; either, (1.) That *Hero Worship* was not begun, because not prohibited. Or, (2.) That it was begun and prohibited too, tho' obscurely. Or, (3.) That, tho' it was begun, yet it was not prohibited.

1.) That it was *not* then begun, because *not* prohibited. And this seems a reasonable Supposition. The Silence of the Law, will, methinks, amount

to



to a Proof, that this Abomination was *not* introduced among the Pagan Superstitions at that Time. For, as the Law was especially levelled against *Polytheism* and *Idolatry*; and this must be esteemed a material Branch of that great Evil, one can scarce think that so material a Branch would have been omitted, in such a punctual and particular Law.—If it should be said, that there is no Mention of Star-worship, in the Decalogue, any more than that of dead Men. It must be noted, that the *Decalogue* is a Summary; and, therefore, tho' only *other Gods* in general are forbid *there*, yet the Particulars might be afterwards enumerated. And further, I think, the Prohibition of Star-worship must be plainly understood, even in the first Commandment. For they were to have no *other Gods* but *Jehovah* himself. Now *those*, to whom the Decalogue was first published, familiarly knew *what other Gods* the Nations at that Time worshipped, which (probably) were only the Sydereal Gods, and some sensible Symbols of them. [Or, if the first Commandment alone be not allowed a sufficient Proof, we may observe that, in the second Commandment, they were forbid to worship the Likeness of any Thing in *Heaven above*,—which seems to point at the sensible Symbols made use of, in worshipping the Sun, Moon, and Stars.] And we know that, at that Time, the Sun, and Moon, and Host of Heaven were worshipped, because they were warned expressly against it, in *Deut. iv. 19.* which may be considered as an authentic Explanation of the *Ten Words*, or Ten Commandments, compendiously delivered in the Tables. So that, I think, the Worship of the heavenly Luminaries was prohibited, and that of dead Men was not, in the *Law of Moses*.

2.) But, if it is supposed that *Hero* Worship was both *begun*, and also, that it was *prohibited*, tho' obscurely; I reply, that it was *not* prohibited even obscurely. For none, upon reading the Decalogue itself, or any of the larger Explications of it, in the *Laws of Moses*, could be led to think of such a Thing; and what has led Men to imagine any Intimations of the kind, is the Familiarity of this Evil in *modern Paganism*, and the Want of considering the *Chronology* of Idolatry, and gradual Increase of it. A slight Reading, even of the *Decalogue*, would lead an *American* Stranger to think, that there were *other Gods* set up besides *Jehovah*, and that *all others* were forbidden. Such a Stranger to the *vulgar Paganism* of the Old World, would also easily perceive, that *all Images* of Things terrestrial, aerial, or aquatic, were prohibited for any religious Uses of Worship. And, by reading the fourth Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, the same Stranger might infer *who* the *other Gods* were, which were named in the first Commandment, even the heavenly Luminaries. But he could never think of Men, or Animals, dead or alive, as Objects of Worship, at that Time, *forbidden*. Tho' he could not miss seeing, that the heavenly Bodies, and Images were forbidden to be worshipped. Now can we think it pious to suppose, that a divine Law should be so enigmatical, that a common Reader could not understand it, when it was for their immediate



diat Preservation against all the popular *Idolatries*, and to be read as a Rule among them, from Age to Age.

3.) If we suppose that the Worship of dead Men, tho' it was a superstitious Practice *then* begun, yet was *not* prohibited;—this sure will be very harsh. For, since it was known, if it was *not forbidden*, then that Silence was equivalent to an Allowance of it. And must we, for the Sake of an Hypothesis, founded on our own Prejudices, *that dead Men were at that Time worshipped*; of which we have not one Tittle of Evidence, in any cotemporary Writer;—must we, I say, for the sake of our own groundless Prepossessions, suppose, that the all-wise God allowed this impious and most profligate Idolatry;—the adoring dead Mortals, that perhaps became *Gods* by Flattery; and that were recent from Tyranny, Debauchery, and all the other shocking Immoralities, which reproach human Nature; and from Villainies, that would bring inferior Men to the Gallows? Can we think that *Jehovah* would connive at their shewing any Honours to their dead Ancestors, which were abused to such impious and blasphemous Superstitions, who declared himself so justly jealous of his own unrivalled Glories of Deity, that he would not give his Glory to another?

But it may be further alledged, that it was *foreseen*; and may, therefore, be Matter of Wonder, that it was *not forbidden*. But, I think, even this may be rationally accounted for. We do not find, that God thought fit to put any new Superstitions into their Head, even by the Prohibition of them. He had given them the Faculty of Reason to discover the Unreasonableness of all Idolatry; but *when*, contrary to all the Principles of right Reason, the World had fallen into several Idolatries, *then* God warns his People against imitating any of those impious Absurdities, which they *had seen*, in clear, and strenuous, and punctual Terms. But he does not warn them against those Abominations, which were *not* at that Time in Use, but leaves them to general Prohibitions, and their own Reason, to fortify them against such new Blasphemies, when they should arise.

There is but one Text that has occurred to my Observation, or that I remember to have seen quoted by others, that has any Appearance of militating with my Proposition. And that is, *Psal. cvi. 28. They joined themselves to Baal-Peor, and eat the Sacrifices of the DEAD*. Some, under the Influences of a strong pre-conceived Opinion, that they then worshipped dead Men, suppose that these Sacrifices of *Baal-Peor*, were of that kind; as Bishop *Cumberland*, and others, and some of the Fathers, as particularly, St. *Augustin*. But *Selden*, and others, take it thus; *they ate of the Sacrifices* made to appease the infernal Gods, to make them propitious to their dead Friends. And then this Text will be no Proof of their Deification of Mortals so early. But others explain it, of Sacrifices made to *dead* and *lifeless* Things, in Honour of *Gods inanimate*; either Idols, which their own Hands had made, or some other

*dead,*



*dead, inanimate Thing*, that could neither hear nor see, as the Sun or Moon.\* And this is the most feasible Sense, in my Opinion. However, I should think an obscure Text, which is in the Spirit of Poetry, and which has such different Senses put upon it by Commentators, cannot be pleaded in Proof of a Fact, which the whole History of the *Law* seems to disprove. For in most of these Senses it is nothing at all to the Purpose.

## S E C T. II.

*Images in Human Shape, not before the Law.*

I Further add, that Images, in Human Shape, were entirely unknown to the Nations in Vicinity to *Canaan*, before the Giving of the *Law*. This I infer, for the same Reason which has been adduced in Support of the two former Propositions. There is no clear Description of the Practice, no clear Prohibition of it, nor any Warning against it. And, as this was much *more* like to entangle Men into superstitious Venerations for the Object, than a Monkey, or a Snake, a Beetle, or a Worm, or the Image of them, one could not well imagine that *the One*, which was *most* likely to make Men idolatrous, should *not* be forbidden; and *that* which was much *less* likely to have that Effect, should be forbidden. And we cannot wonder, that there were no Images in human Shape, before there were Gods in human Shape, *i. e.* Hero Gods. What Shape could they imagine, by which to distinguish the Sun from the Moon? or either from the Stars? except as to their Magnitudes, or Degrees of Vividness, in their Light? For they were all lucid Spheres, moving without any distinguishing Shape thro' the boundless Plains of Ether.

## S E C T. III.

*The Distinction of Sex among the Pagan Gods, not before the Law.*

THE Distinction of Sex among the *Pagan* Gods, could not be introduced, till the Deification of Mortals. There could be no Distinction among the Sydereal Deities, of *this* Kind. How should they conceive, that the Sun was Male, or that the Moon was Female; or that any other of the Stars were thus distinguished by Sex from each other, who all of them rolled over their Heads, with such similar Appearances, and fixed Distances?—The two great Orientalists, *Bochart* and *Dr. Owen*, have observed, that there

\* Vid. *Spencer de Legib. Hebr.*



is no Word in the *Hebrew* Language to express *Goddeſs*, or a *Female God*.\* — The *Greek* Translators, vulgarly called the *Septuagint*, do indeed, in many Places, translate *Baal* in the feminine Gender : And also, *Aſteroth* in the ſame, as a *Goddeſs* : But there is no Foundation for either in the Original *Hebrew*. Thus it is *תַּבַּא* in the *Greek* Verſion, *Jeremiah* ii. 8, 28. and xix. 5. and *Hoſea* ii. 8. and other Places. The ſame Translators have alſo rendered the *Aſteroth*, or *Aſtoreth* of *Solomon*, *Aſtarte* ; and have thought fit to call that Deity, the *Goddeſs of the Sidonians*, tho' in the *Hebrew* it is a masculine Plural, *Elohim*. The *Greek* Translators, or *Alexandrian Jews*, were moſt probably miſguided in their Accounts of theſe earlier Times, by the familiar Superſtitious of the *Pagans* in later Times. When the *Helleniſt Jews* tranſlated the Old Teſtament into *Greek*, the Doctrine of Sexes in their Deities, Gods and Goddeſſes, was ſo familiar, in the *Pagan* Theology, that they did not perceive it to be *modern*, nor did any body then ſuſpect its Original. And, indeed, it might well be unſuſpected, ſince Writing did not come into *Egypt* till about the Reign of *Shiſhak* ; who, I think, introduced the Deification of Mortals. However, it was certainly preſumptuous to bring into the Tranſlation of the *Bible*, a Notion, which was, at that Time, a Stranger to *Paganism* itſelf ; and for which there is no Foundation in the *Hebrew* Text. This ſeems very clear, as to the Inſtance of Calling the *Aſteroth* of *Solomon*, the *Goddeſs of the Sidonians*. But I own, among the *Pagan* World, this Notion of Sex in the Deities might have grown familiar in the Times of the *later Prophets*. It is ſeveral Times mentioned by *Jeremiah*, *Jer.* vii. 18. The Women made Cakes to the *Queen of Heaven*. And, *Jer.* xliv. 17, 18, 19, 25. In which Verſes, the *Prophet* denounces againſt the Captives, who were then retired to *Egypt*, great Judgments for thoſe Idolatries to the *Queen of Heaven*, which Idolatries they ſo obſtinately avowed. Theſe Oblations were *למלכת השמים* *Limlebeth baſhamajim*, TO THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN. And the feminine Article is always made uſe of, that theſe Offerings were TO HER, not to Him, or to them. And, indeed, as it is certain, that Gods and Goddeſſes were then well known in the *Heathen* Theology ; ſo this Superſtition might, at that Time, have prevailed among the *Jews* alſo. And what ſtill more favours this Tranſlation [*Queen of Heaven*] is this, that this was peculiarly the Idolatry of the Women, which the *Prophet* reproveth, and which they juſtify ; as is evident, *Jer.* xliv. 19. Then all the WOMEN answered, — When we burnt Incenſe to the *Queen of Heaven*, did we make HER Cakes to worſhip HER, and pour out Drink-offerings unto HER, without our Men ?

\* Bochart. Peleg. p. 860. Owen. Theologoumena. Van Dale de Idol. p. 25.



## SEASONABLENESS OF REVELATION.

HAVING brought down *Tradition* to that Age of the World, in which it must, in the Nature of Things, degenerate into great Obscurity and Uncertainty, and languish almost into a State of Evanescence; even, if the *Hebrew Chronology* is admitted. And having further shewn, from unquestionable Testimony, that Superstition had swelled to such a Magnitude, that what they called *Religion*, was become the Patroness of Lust and Cruelty, of the most shocking and unnatural Kind; as in the Rites of *Baal-Peor*, and *Moloch*. That, in *Egypt*, it was become so foolish a Thing, as to worship the Images of Bulls, Cows, and Calves, Insects, Reptiles, and Vermin; Images of Things in Air, Earth, and Seas, promiscuously chosen, as wild Superstition inspired. And there were Hopes, and Fears, alike foolish, which made them consecrate a Crocodile, and an Ibis; a Serpent, or a Cat.—This was the Condition of Mankind, about the Days of *Moses*. An Help they certainly must have wanted, tho' whether it would please God to afford them extraordinary Help, could not be determined, till it was actually bestowed, or expressly promised. But, about this Time, we find, by *Moses*, that God did, in an extraordinary Manner, impart the Knowledge of his divine Counsels to Mankind. *Historically*, as to what was past, and then very near lost; *prophetically*, as to many important Things to come; and *doctrinally*, as to many necessary Truths and Duties, in which the World stood in Need of Instruction; in order to revive spiritual Knowledge, and counterwork those wicked Superstitions, which tended to expunge Virtue out of the World. *TRADITION*, which had been gradually *weakening* for several Ages, had now languished into great Obscurity. There had, by this Time, been an ample Experiment of the Incompetency of *Oral Tradition*, for preserving the Primitive Facts, concerning the Creation, the State of Innocence in Paradise, the Fall, the promised Seed, and even the general Deluge, and the Causes thereof, in their uncorrupted Simplicity. There had been a like full Experiment of the Incompetency of Tradition, for preserving the Primitive Sentiments and Doctrines in an incorrupt State; as the Ancients had them, either from original Revelations, or reasoning from those venerable ancient Facts.—*REASON*, as Men had actually made Use of it, had proved so insufficient an Expounder of those primitive Sentiments, and so poor a Coadjutor, or Substitute, in the Decays of *Tradition*, that the World was sunk into, and overwhelmed with the most gross Ignorance in *Religious* Matters; and overflowed with an Inundation of Idolatry and Superstition. Even such Superstition, as nourished, under the Notion of *Religion*, and pleasing the Gods, the most bestial *Impurities*, the most inhuman and unnatural *Cruelties*, and the most unmanly and contemptible *Follies*.

The



The same great Historian, who gives us the only authentic Account of the State of the World in that Age, relates also the extraordinary Manner, in which the *God of Truth and Mercy* revealed and published his own divine Will and Law, at *Mount Sinai*. And how he ordered it to be recorded in Writing, as a more permanent Way of transmitting it to Posterity, than any hitherto made use of. And all that *Moses* relates, hath the strongest Marks of Credibility, in the very Nature of Things. It is very credible, that Mankind should really have been as stupid and idolatrous in their Religion, as he describes them to have been, either in *Egypt* or *Canaan*. Since, by the Confession of their own Writers, the *Pagans* were more grossly and absurdly superstitious in much later Ages; when they pretended to a much higher Improvement in Science and all polite Arts.—Again; it is congruous to our most respectful and venerable Sentiments of the supreme Deity, to believe, that he might graciously vouchsafe to the *human Race*, plunged into such helpless Ignorance, some supernatural Assistance, in this Extremity; to guide them more perfectly to the Knowledge of himself, and their Duty to him, and to instruct them more clearly in all the necessary Principles of Religion and Virtue. In this calamitous Declension of ancient Knowledge; in this languid and almost evanescent State of primitive Tradition; and in this Inundation of Idolatry, Superstition and Vice, it appears altogether worthy of divine Compassion, to vouchsafe to the World supernatural Information; and to appoint a Way of perpetuating those Informations, different from that of Tradition, which had proved so insufficient. And, if it is worthy of divine Goodness, then it is entirely credible, that God should substitute the more stable Method of *written Laws*, which might be a more permanent and certain Conveyance to future Ages.

And, as the World had not found out the Art of *alphabetical* Writing, he graciously imparted this amazing Art in a supernatural Manner, at a Time when the World stood in such great Need of it. In this Method, he perpetuated his own Laws, the Statutes of the future *Hebrew Commonwealth*, set up under himself, as a special Theocracy, and to preserve the Notion of the divine Unity, as a capital Truth among Mankind.—In this Method, he recorded the Original History of Mankind, of the Creation, the State of Innocency, the Fall, the Promised Seed, the Restoration of Worship, and the great Event and Causes of the Deluge;—all which Facts were near lost. History, which if once lost, would be irrecoverable in any other Way but Revelation. And which, if it had been only preserved in old Fables, had almost as well have been entirely forgot.



## C H A P. XVI.

*On the Chronology of the Septuagint.*

**B**EFORE I proceed on this Subject, the learned Reader will excuse some Account of the State of this Question, for the Benefit of plainer Christians; who may often meet with this Objection of the great *Difference* in the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Computations, unless we state in what the *Difference* consists.—The Case is this: The *Hebrew Bibles*, which our Translators follow, compute the Distance from the Creation to the Flood, at 1656 Years; but the *Greek* Translation, commonly called the *Septuagint*, reckon 2256. The Difference arises from this; the *Greek* Version adds 100 Years to the Age of every Antediluvian Patriarch, before they had the Children, named by *Moses*, except *Jared*, *Methuselah*, and *Lamech*. And the same Number of Years to the Ages of the first Patriarchs *after* the Flood, *Arphaxad*, *Salah*, &c. down to *Terah*. *Arphaxad* had his Son at 35, according to the *Hebrew*, but 135 according to the *Greek*; as appears from this Table.

*Hebrew Computation.**Greek.*

<i>Adam</i> - - - - -	<i>begat</i> <i>Seth</i> - - - - -	130	- - - - -	230
<i>Seth</i> - - - - -	<i>Enos</i> - - - - -	105	- - - - -	205
<i>Enos</i> - - - - -	<i>Cainan</i> - - - - -	90	- - - - -	190
<i>Cainan</i> - - - - -	<i>Mahalaleel</i> - - - - -	70	- - - - -	170
<i>Mahalaleel</i> - - - - -	<i>Jared</i> - - - - -	65	- - - - -	165
<i>Jared</i> - - - - -	<i>Enoch</i> - - - - -	162	- - - - -	162
<i>Enoch</i> - - - - -	<i>Methuselah</i> - - - - -	65	- - - - -	165
<i>Methuselah</i> - - - - -	<i>Lamech</i> - - - - -	187	- - - - -	187
<i>Lamech</i> - - - - -	<i>Noah</i> - - - - -	182	- - - - -	182
<i>Noah</i> - - - - -		600	- - - - -	600
		1656		2256

As for the *Difference* in the *Greek* Chronology, concerning the Births of *Lamech* and *Noah*, this might possibly be an Error of Transcribers; and so need not be insisted on, unless we say that, as the Translators had knowingly falsified the Chronology, God suffered them to be so incautious as to fall into such Errors as might destroy their own Authority; that is, in this particular Point, which they had most presumptuously altered out of national Vanity.

For,



For, according to the *Septuagint*, as well as the *Hebrew*, \*

*Methuselah* died, aged ————— 969

*Methuselah* had *Lamech*, when he was aged ————— 167

*Lamech* had *Noah*, when he was aged ————— 188

The Flood came, when *Noah* was aged ————— 600

955

So that there remains of *Methuselah's* Life, when the Flood came, 14 Years.

I now proceed to enquire into the Reasons of this Difference, and to account for it, as well as I am able.

I. I shall consider the Reasons which have induced *modern* Writers to prefer the *Greek* Translation to the Original *Hebrew*; after the latter had been so generally received, ever since the Revival of Learning.

II. I shall consider the Arguments, which brought the *Greek* Version into so great Reputation *early*; and upon which it maintained it so long.

III. I shall attempt to account for the Difference which now subsists betwixt the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Chronology; and explain how it first came in.

I. What induced several *modern* Critics to prefer the *Greek* Version, and particularly its Chronology, to that of the *Hebrew*. — The first, who avowedly appeared in this Cause, was the learned *Isaac Vossius*, who publicly maintained the Necessity of abandoning all our *modern* Systems of Chronology, as he calls them, and returning again to the *ancient* System, which had been in Use for so many Ages. — The Arguments which induced him hereto, were, (1.) He thought there were several considerable Difficulties in the *Mosaic* History, which, according to the *Hebrew* Chronology, were almost insuperable; that are made very easy by the Computations of the *Septuagint*. Such as these, that *Noah*, who lived according to the *Hebrew* Calculation, to above the 50th Year of *Abraham*, should never once be named in the Annals of any Nations; tho' many Kingdoms were erected before that Time, and some *Dynasties* in *Egypt* were then expired. † We see here the Folly of very great Men, in arguing from the Sufficiency of the *Pagan* Fragments, when their Authority is so dubious as to these most ancient Times. How knew *Vossius*, that there were any *Egyptian* *Dynasties* expired at *Noah's* Death? Again; that *Noah* should never be once mentioned by *Moses*, about the Building the Tower of *Babel*, or any of the Transactions of *Shinaar*; tho' their Behaviour there appears to have been an impious Act of Rebellion against God. If he had

\* *Bedford, Script. Chron.* p. 48.

† *Voss. Ætat. Mund.* p. 17. N. 6.



had been there, he must have *opposed* it; and had he done so, it would have been too memorable to be *omitted* by *Moses*. Therefore he concludes, that *Noah* was *dead* at that Time, according to the Calculations of the *Greek* Version.—Further, that 101 Years after the Flood, was too *narrow* a Time for attempting a *Dispersion*, and there must have been at the Birth of *Peleg*, too few People in the World for such an Undertaking.—Again; that the *Canaanitish* Patriarchs of the Line of *Ham*, cotemporary with *Arphaxad*, *Salah* and *Heber* should never once be mentioned, by *Moses*, to have ever come in *Abraham's* Way, in all his Pilgrimage in *Canaan* or *Egypt*; tho', according to the *Hebrew*, they must have been all *alive*.—These, says *Vossius*, and his Followers, are all easily accounted for, by the *Greek* Chronology, according to which they were all then *dead*.—But I apprehend all these Difficulties are as well removed, on our Scheme of the Time and Circumstances of the general *Dispersion*. And, as they are all as agreeable to the Letter of *Moses*, and more agreeable to the common Reason and Probability of Things, I shall add no more upon this Head.

2. It is alledged, that there doth not appear, that Proportion and Congruity in the *Hebrew*, betwixt the Ages when the Patriarchs, before the Flood, begot their Children, as there is in the *Greek*.\*

But to this I would reply, 1. That there is no Foundation in the Reason of Things, for fixing this Proportion betwixt the Years of Puberty and Decay. There was, indeed, a great Diversity in the Circumstances of the World, in those primeval Ages, from those of latter Times. *Vossius* insists, that there must be a Difference betwixt the Length of Childhood, in a long Life and a short One. And this the *Hebrew* Calculations allow; for the youngest are not said to have had Children till 65, which, in our later Times, are the Years of Decay. But, when the World was to be peopled, and all Arts to be invented, it was the Will of God, that Man's Life should be long. And, besides, there is a Proportion observed in the *Hebrew*. For the Antediluvians, who lived to 900 Years old, had their Children from about 80; but the Postdiluvians, who lived but half that Age, as about 400, had their Children from about 30 Years of Age. What Incongruity there was in it, that the Patriarchs should see so many Generations, I cannot discern; † when, thro' their great Strength, they might be useful at the Heads of Families, either by their Labour or Advice, almost all that Time.

2. I further reply, that, on their own Scheme, there is no Congruity or Proportion, as to the Ages after the Flood. For *Arphaxad* lived in all, 438 Years; and had his Son in the 135th Year, which is about a third Part of his own Age. And this is the lowest Proportion in any Age of the World, particularly less than the Antediluvians, according to the *Septuagint*.—But then *Peleg*, *Reu*, *Serug*, and *Nabor*, had each of them their Son, (which, according to this Argument, is supposed to be the eldest) at about 130, which

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was

\* *Voss. Ætat. Mund.* 16. *Twells's Chronol. Sept.* p. 90. † *Bedford. Scrip. Chron.* p. 49.



was about the *half* of their several Ages; this is an *unnatural* Proportion betwixt the Time of Maturity and Decay, which has prevailed in *no* Age. That they should *linger* out a barren, over-grown Youth, above *half* their Life, when the World was unpeopled, is unnatural and incredible; it is not agreeable to the Benediction of Fruitfulness, *Gen. ix. 1.*

3. It is very injudicious to insist on *Adam's* Case, and his having *Seth* at 230 Years of Age, as an Instance of the Propriety of the *Greek* Numbers. For *Adam* was created in a State of *Maturity*, and therefore might have had a Child in the *first* Year. And besides, he had two Sons, *Cain* and *Abel*, who were each arrived at Man's *Estate*, before the Birth of *Seth*; for they were, each of them, capable of presiding at solemn Devotions; and were, each of them, engaged in particular Occupations. Yet *Twells* (*Chron. Sept. p. 91.*) insists largely on this Instance of *Adam*.

4. It is alike injudicious to insist on the Cases of *Terah*, *Abram*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, as proper Instances of the Age of Manhood, at which, in the Course of Nature, Men had Children, in their Age of the World. "It is contrary," says Dr. *Twells*, to all Probability, that the seven first Patriarchs after the Flood, who lived upwards of 300 and 400 Years each, should beget their Sons at the Age of 30 Years, or thereabouts; and yet, that the following Patriarchs, who did not live half so long, should not beget their *First-born*, till double that Age, *Abram* at 87, *Isaac* at 60, *Jacob* at 85." *Ibid. p. 97.*

Now it is evident, that *Terah* had Children, long before *Abram*, by *Vossius's* own Confession; for he was born in the 130th of *Terah*; and *Lot*, the Son of *Haran*, was near as old as *Abram*, and had Children long before the Birth of *Ismael*. As to *Abram*, he was married when he left *Chaldæa*; and probably had been so some Time; for it is observed that *Sarah* was barren; which would scarce have been taken notice of, unless she had been married some considerable Time. *Abram's* being so long childless, is complained of by himself, as a great Affliction, *Gen. xv. 2, 3.* And when he had *Isaac*, it is represented as a *miraculous* Favour, that, in the Course of Nature, he had no Reason to expect, at least by *Sarah*. *Isaac*, tho' he had not his Children till 60, yet married at 40; which, from all Circumstances, appeareth to have been a State of full Manhood. His Behaviour was that of a grave, wise Man; when *Rebecca* met him, he was walking and meditating in the Field, *Gen. xxiv. 63.* Tho' *Jacob* might not have Children before, betwixt 80 and 90 Years of his Age, yet his Twin-Brother *Esau*, married at 40. *Gen. xxvi. 34.* In the *Abrahamic* Family, the Design of Providence being probably to preserve primitive Tradition more perfect, by its passing so long thro' a few Hands; it begun to operate soon, by their having their Children very late in their Lives. As *Terah* had *Abram* at 130; and *Abram* had *Isaac* at 100; and *Jacob* had his Sons after 80. And further; it seems to me probable, that the *Hebrew* Patriarchs lived generally longer than the ordinary Age of their Contemporaries; in Subserviency to the same Design of Providence, to pre-serve



serve a more perfect *Tradition* of ancient Truths, by its passing thro' so few Hands; for *old* People are apt to *talk* most frequently of the Transactions and Knowledge of their *younger* Years.

5. The adding the *round* Sum of 100 Years to each Sum of Years mentioned in the *Hebrew*, seems to betray the whole *Fraud* of this Augmentation. It is in no Congruity or Proportion. For tho' the Antediluvian Patriarchs spent about a fourth or fifth Part of their Lives in Celibacy, yet in many of the Postdiluvians, about *half* of their whole Life was *so* spent. It appears to me, that the *Greek* Translators found *all the Sums*, which are now in our *Hebrew* Bibles, in the original Copies, which they made use of, about *Ptolemy's* Time; and that they *added* 100 to each Sum, without any Regard to *Proportion*; but only out of Ostentation of *Antiquity*: And that they might do it, with the least Suspicion, they *added* just 100, neither more nor less, except in the Ages of *Methuselah* and *Lamech*.

II. I now proceed to consider the Arguments which brought the *Greek* Version into so great Reputation *early*, and upon which it maintained it so *long*.

I. The historical Account, which is given of this Version, is so pompous and full of the marvellous, that Persons were thereby insensibly led to an undue Veneration for it.—The Author, indeed, on whose Authority the whole Story of this Version is founded, is *Aristeus*; and as it is certainly a Composition of great Antiquity; all, who mention this Fable afterwards, seem to have taken it from him; tho' they have added several new Circumstances, which were invented after this Work was wrote.—*Aristeus* professes himself to have been an Officer of Distinction in the Court of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, the second *Ptolemy* after *Alexander the Great*. This Book is written in the Form of a Letter to his Brother *Philocrates*; in which he gives him an Account of his own Embassy to the High-Priest of the *Jews*, and the Occasion of it, the King's Design of erecting a great Library at *Alexandria*. This great Work was carried on, under the Care and Direction of *Demetrius Phalereus*, a learned and noble *Athenian*. This great Man suggested to the King, that the Law of the *Jews* deserved to be taken in, among that general Collection of the greatest Curiosities in the learned World. But that, as they were in an unknown Language and Character, they must be translated into *Greek*. Upon this, the curious Monarch resolved to send to the *Jewish* High-Priest, to obtain a Copy of the Law, and proper Translators from *Judæa*. *Aristeus* here takes Occasion to plead with the King, for the Release of the Captive *Jews*, which had been taken by his Father; for he told *Ptolemy*, that he could not expect either a true Copy, or Translation of the *Jewish* Law, while so many of that Nation were kept in Servitude. On this, the King, of his own Accord, assigned the Redemption-Money out of his own Treasury, at about twenty Drachma's a Man, for all the *Jewish* Captives. After this, *Demetrius* moved the King to write to the High-Priest



of the *Jews*, to send him six Men out of each Tribe, being 72 in all, Men eminent for their Virtue and Age, to finish the Translation at *Alexandria*. *Aristeus* and *Andreas* were sent on this Embassy, who brought back with them a Copy of the *Law*, and the 72 *Interpreters*.—After their Arrival at *Alexandria*, the King entertained them sumptuously, and made Trial of their Abilities, by 72 *Questions*, which *Aristeus* sets down. Then *Demetrius* carried the 72 Elders to *Pharos*, and put them into an *House*, provided for them, where they might more undisturbedly confer together, and carry on the *Version*, which they finished in 72 Days; that afterwards *Demetrius* caused the *Version* to be read, before an Assembly of the *Jews*, who declared it exact and faithful. After which, the *Interpreters* were sent Home, by this great Prince, loaden with Honours and Presents.

The next Author, who mentions this *Version*, is *Aristobulus*, an *Alexandrian Jew*, and a *peripatetic* Philosopher, who is supposed to be that *Aristobulus* mentioned, 2 *Maccab. cap. 1.* who flourished about 125 Years before *Christ*, as *Dr. Prideaux* computes. He is said to have wrote some Commentaries on the *Pentateuch*, dedicated to *Ptolemy Philometor*. [*Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. 1. p. 342.*] tho' He is said by the same Father, to be cotemporary with *Philadelphus*.\* *Eusebius* sometimes cites *Aristobulus*, without any Reference to his Times,† and sometimes with express Notes thereof, as in *Præpar. Evang. Lib. 13. cap. 12.* where he is quoted, from a Book dedicated to *Ptolemy*, a Descendant of *Philadelphus*, and therefore he was not his Contemporary.

But, from this Diversity of Opinions, it appears that there was much Uncertainty, as to the Age of this Author, and the learned *Prideaux* questions his being. He observes, that as *Clemens Alexandrinus* was the first who takes Notice of these Commentaries, it augments the Suspicion of their being of a Composition later than their Date; that neither *Philo* or *Josephus* should mention them, if they had been the genuine Work of so great a Philosopher as *Aristobulus*.‡ *Philo Judæus*, the famous *Alexandrian*, about contemporary with our Saviour, is the third Author who mentions this *Version*. [*Vit. Mos. Lib. 2.*] that the 72 *Interpreters* repaired to *Pharos*, as a Place of Retirement. But then he adds several Particulars, as to their *Versions* punctually agreeing, even *verbatim*, notwithstanding the Copiousness of the *Greek Language*, by the Spirit of *Prophecy*; and that the *Jews of Alexandria* kept an annual Festival, in Commemoration of this great Event, of which *Aristeus* is silent.—The fourth Author is the celebrated *Josephus*, who flourished under the *Vespasians*, and finished his *History of Jewish Antiquities*, in the Reign of *Domitian*, near the End of the first Century of the *Christian Æra*. But he relates the Story according to *Aristeus*, and gives only an Abridgment of it.—*Justin Martyr* is the fifth Writer, who mentions this *Version*; — an Author who flourished about the Middle of the second Century, about 100 Years after *Philo*.§ It is plain from *Justin*, that there were great Additions made to the

Story,

\* *Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. 5. p. 595.*  
*Connect. Vol. II. p. 40. § Prid. ibid.*

† *Euseb. Præp. Evang. Lib. 7. cap. 14.*

‡ *Prid.*



Story, which *Philo* first published, as to the punctual Agreement of the Translations, even *verbatim*, before *Justin's* Coming to *Alexandria*. For *Justin* mentions 72 Cells, which *Ptolemy* built for them at *Pharos*; and that they each made a *separate* Version, without Opportunity of conferring together. [*Just. Cohort. ad Græc. p. 14.*] which is contrary to *Aristeus*; and both cannot be true, that they *did*, and that they *did not* confer. The same Father, in his second *Apology*, addressed to the Emperor *Antoninus Pius*, and his Sons, speaks of this Curiosity of *Ptolemy*; but says, he sent to *Herod*, King of the *Jews*, for a Copy of their sacred Books; and, upon finding them in an unknown Language, sent again for Interpreters from *Judæa*.—Now this shews, that History was not a very correct Thing in those Ages, or he could never have fallen into such an Anachronism, as to the Ages of *Ptolemy* and *Herod*.—And as to the Correction of *Grabe*, who substitutes *ιερεϊ* instead of *ηερωδην*, to the Priest instead of *Herod*, it seems not sufficient to account for it. For there are other Faults in *Justin's* Narration, as the two Messages to *Jerusalem*, &c. when no other elder Writers mention any but one. However, *Herod* might, probably, be talked of in their traditional Stories, as some Way concerned in sending both the *Hebrew* Copy, and a *Greek* Version of the *Jewish* sacred Books to *Alexandria*. For the *Ptolemaic* Library was burnt in the Wars of *Julius Caesar* with the *Alexandrians*; and *Cleopatra* afterwards erected another in the *Serapæum*, called the Daughter of the former. And she might send to *Herod*, her Contemporary, for new Copies of the *Hebrew* Law; which had been so much talked of, as one of the principal Curiosities in the ancient Library of *Philadelphus*. Hence not only *Justin Martyr*, but also *Tertullian*,\* and *Chrysostom*,† confounded the Story of the two Libraries of *Ptolemy* and *Cleopatra*, the latter of which was in the Temple of *Serapis*; which they both mention as containing this ancient Copy.

The Case (I apprehend) was thus: He had all this Story together, from the Traditions of the *Jews of Alexandria*; and might set all down from Memory, as they related it to him, and so might fall into some chronological or historical Mistakes; as he perhaps heard both *Ptolemy* and *Herod* mentioned. The Generality of the ancient Fathers, who lived after *Justin Martyr*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Irenæus*, &c. follow him in the Matter of the Cells, and the wonderful Agreement of the Versions, (as is noted by *Dupin* and *Prideaux*) except *Eusebius* and *Jerome*.—But there can be no Wonder that it should be so; for they being most conversant with *Justin's* Writings, might go no farther for their Accounts of this Transaction, than his Book, or these *Alexandrian* Traditions.

Upon the whole Story of *Aristeus*, I would make the following Observations.

I. Some of the Facts, which *Aristeus* relates, being of a public Nature, might be in the main true.

1. Pto-

\* *Tertul. Apolog. cap. 18.*

† *Chrysost. Tom. 6. Ed. Sav. p. 373.*



1. *Ptolemy Philadelphus* did erect a *Library* at *Alexandria*. This was an Action of such Notoriety, that it could not have been feigned, if there had been no such Thing. And it was *worthy* of his Magnificence and Curiosity, to employ that great Number of learned Men, which resorted to his Court, in collecting all the Monuments of Learning, that they could hear of. And it was also *congruous* to that Monarch's Wealth and Grandeur, to scruple no Expence, which could be supposed, any Way proportionable to his Design. And then, further, it was agreeable to his *Grecian* Extraction and Education, to form a Design to erect a Library, because Learning was then in the greatest Reputation in *Greece*; and his Father, *Ptolemy Soter*, was a learned Man himself.

2. It may be true, that he should have a Mind to have so great a Work methodically carried on, and therefore might put the Management of it under the Care of a Person of Reputation for Learning and Business. *Demetrius Phalereus* was, by several Accounts, a Man celebrated for his Abilities, and was, at least for some time, in great Credit at the Court of *Ptolemy*, the Father, and perhaps at first, in Intimacy with *Philadelphus* himself. And he might put the Father on a Scheme, which the Son finished. And, as *Demetrius* was an *Athenian*, he might urge the Example of *Pisistratus*, who had formed a like Design, some Ages before, at *Athens*.

3. It may be very probable, that *Ptolemy* might desire of himself, or be instigated by the learned Men about his Person, to desire to have the *Jewish sacred Books* in his Library. For he designed it to be a Repository of every Thing valuable in itself, or scarce and curious.

4. It is alike probable, that the learned Men about the King should put him upon procuring a most correct Copy from *Jerusalem* itself. And, if they did, that he should send an Embassy to demand, or request, such a Complement from the High-Priest of the *Jews*. One may reasonably suppose that they would endeavour to procure the most exact Copies of every Book, which they deposited in the Royal *Museum*. And, as this was a public Act, it might be known by Tradition, or some Annals that were kept, that *Aristeus* was one sent upon this Business. The Ambassador might have several other Things to negotiate at *Jerusalem*; and considering the King's Scheme of a Library, he might have it in Commission to transact the Affair of sending this Copy, among other Particulars of his Embassy.

5. It is (again) very probable, that some of the *Jewish Priests* and *Elders* might be sent, by the High-Priest, to carry the *sacred Copy* to *Alexandria*. For they might not be willing to send it by any profane Hands, considering the high and just Veneration they had for it.

6. There might be many Reasons for Redeeming the *Jewish Captives*, which we know nothing of, as no ancient Author mentions it, besides *Aristeus* and his Followers. But, as this must have been a public Act, there might have been some Foundation for this Story. Tho' neither the Sum paid for the Ransom,



Ransom, nor the Reason of this Edict, seem at all probable, viz. that he should pay so high, for what he, as a *Pagan*, must consider only as a Curiosity, and which he would certainly have commanded from a tributary Province of his own Empire.

II. Out of these public Facts, it was not difficult to forge an History, with many invented Circumstances, which the *Fabulist* imagined would bring Honour to his Country. But then, many of these are greatly improbable, as they lie in *Aristeus*.

1. Many Things, as related by him, were *private* Transactions. All that passed at Court, betwixt *Demetrius*, *Aristeus*, *Sofibius*, and the King, were in private Conference; so that what *they* proposed, and what *Ptolemy* replied, could not be known in Public, but as far as they pleased. Court Secrets, and the Transactions of the Cabinet, are commonly mere *Conjectures* in any Age.

Who, now, perfectly knows *how* our King *James* came to the Knowledge of the Powder Plot? But if it was, as some have hinted, by Information from the *King of France*;\* then, some *profane* Flatteries were made use of, on account of the King's *Penetration* and *Sagacity*, as hard to excuse, as any of these Fables of *Aristeus*.

2. This Work could not be drawn up by *Aristeus*, who was a professed *Heathen*, but by some *Jew* of *Alexandria*. "This, says the learned and candid Doctor of the *Sorbonne*, *Dupin*, to speak my Mind freely, is my Opinion of the Matter." For the Author, thro' the whole History, speaks as a *Jew*, and makes all the rest speak in the *same* manner. He speaks throughout of the *Law of Moses*, as a divine Book. *Aristeus*, tho' a *Pagan*, says so himself; he makes *Demetrius* say the *same*; and represents *Ptolemy* to be so far convinced of it, as to *adore* the Copy, when it was brought to him.

When he relates the Discourse he had with the King, to obtain Liberty for the *Jewish* Captives, he says, that the *Jews* worshipped the God, who *knew* all Things, and *created* all Things. He makes *Demetrius* say, that the *Laws of the Jews* were *more wise* and *holy* than any others, because *divine*. Now, none but a *Jew* would have spoke in this manner of their Laws and Religion, whilst they themselves rejected them; and they could not have done so, for they are now supposed to be *ignorant* of the *Jewish* Laws. They were, at this very Time, soliciting to have them made *known*, which were before locked up, in an unknown Language and Character.

3. Since there is one *Forgery* so plain, with respect to the *Author*, we may easily admit, that the whole was a *Forgery* of some *Hellenist Jew*, in which he *added* to some, that might be known Facts, many *Circumstances* of his own *Invention*. But, when it was *wrote*, the Author might think it more for the Honour of his Country to father it upon *Aristeus*, a *Pagan*; and perhaps, either from Tradition, or some private Annals, *Aristeus* might have known.

\* Vid. *Rapin's Hist. of England*. Tindal. Not. in Loc.



known to have been a Favourite of his Prince. This Book is a Letter to his Brother; and so, when it was published, it might easily be pretended to have been found, either among *Aristeus's*, or his Brother's Papers; and, if this was about 100 Years after, all would be dead, that could contradict the Story, as related in this Book.

4. It is highly improbable, that there should be any want of Translators from *Jerusalem*, to be sent to *Alexandria*. For the learned Jews of *Alexandria* were supposed to understand the *Hebrew*, as well as those of *Palestine*, it being a dead Language to both; and they must be supposed to understand the *Greek*, better than those of *Palestine*; because it was the vulgar, living Language of the Country. Whereas the Jews of *Judea* spoke a Dialect of the *Chaldee*, or *Syriac*; tho' perhaps with some Mixtures of the ancient *Hebrew* and *Phœnician*. For it is probable, some of the meanest of the People, who were left in the Country, might retain their ancient Tongue, which they spoke before the *Babylonish Captivity*; and these, mixing with the People who returned from *Chaldea*, might form a mix'd or *Syro-Chaldaic Tongue*.

5. It is further greatly improbable, that the Jews of *Egypt* should be so long without a Translation of their Law; much less, that they should have no Desire to know it in common, till *Ptolemy's Curiosity* brought them to it; and his incredible *Scrupulosity* furnished them with a correct Version of it. This Fable seems to be incredible both Ways, either that the *Alexandrian Jews* should be so careless, incurious, and even impious, as to be without a Translation of their Law, in a Country where they had been so long settled; or that *Ptolemy*, a Pagan Prince, and a great Idolater, should be so nicely and scrupulously curious, to send for 72 Persons, to serve him, in making out this correct Translation.

6. It is a further Improbability, to suppose *Demetrius*, who was of *Athenian* Education, should have been acquainted with the Distinction of the twelve Tribes so well, as to advise the King to send for six Elders out of each Tribe; or that *Ptolemy* himself should send for such a Number, under this Character, of six out of each Tribe, when the Books of the Law were yet unknown, where that Division of the *Hebrew Nation* was set down; and when, in all Likelihood, that Division did not remain, with any Exactness, after the *Assyrian* and *Babylonish Captivities*.

7. It is, lastly, very improbable, that *Ptolemy* should give such an immense Sum for the Redemption of the Captives, and in Donations to the Interpreters, and to the High-Priest, and the Temple, to obtain this Version.

And that he should, in the Hurries of Arms, and the Tumults of Pleasures and Empire, so triflingly amuse himself with this Number of Questions, many of them of little Moment; as *Aristeus* relates them.—All these Incongruities, in the Story of the manner of obtaining this *Greek Version*, go near to a Demonstration,



monstration, that it is, in the main of it, an *Hellenist Fable*, adapted to the Taste of the *Jewish Nation*, and for the aggrandizing the same People.

Our learned *Lightfoot*,\* indeed, goes another Way to work, in depreciating the *Greek Version*; and seems to question, whether there was any *Version* sent to *Ptolemy*; but only a fair *Copy* of the *Law in Hebrew*, and also in *Greek Characters*. He gives the History of the *Rabbins*, particularly from the *Talmuds*, very different from the *Greek Writers*. That it was a *Day of Bitterness to the Jews*, when the five Elders first transcribed the *Law* for *Ptolemy*. And when, afterwards, he sent for 72, he did not apprise them for what *Purpose* they were sent; but, putting them into different Cells, ordered them to write out the *Law of Moses* for him; which they did with great Harmony; only each of them altered thirteen Places in the *Law*. This (says our learned Countryman) must have been made in the *Hebrew*; for the Places are not found altered in the Sense, in the *Greek Version*; as they are said to be altered by the *Talmudists*; it will agree only to some Alteration in the *Hebrew Words*, being spelled, or placed something differently, as to all the Passages which they specify. *Lightfoot* accordingly thinks, that, if there was any *Version* made, it was for the Use of the *Heathen Princes*, that they might know whether those peculiar Laws of that People were consistent with the Peace of the Kingdoms, which gave them Protection, as in *Egypt*.—But it seems to me, on the whole, that *Dean Prideaux's* Account of the Original of this Version is the most probable, viz. † That, when the *Jews* settled in *Alexandria*, by the Favour of *Alexander* and *Ptolemy Soter*, they insensibly lost their own Tongue, and fell into that of *Alexandria*. And, as they in *Judæa* had their *Law* read in *Hebrew*, and then explained in *Chaldee*, and perhaps afterwards in *Syriac*, which the People could understand; so, when the *Greek* was become their vulgar Language, they had the *Law* read, perhaps as before, in *Hebrew*, and explained in *Greek*; for the same Reason, that it was then best known. And that this Translation was made for their own Use, by the learned *Jews* of *Alexandria*, as soon as they perceived the Necessity of it to the People, and it could be conveniently executed.—And this is entirely reconcileable to the Opinion of Dr. *Lightfoot*, that many Passages are translated to be in Conformity with several *Jewish Traditions*; for we may suppose the *Jews* of *Alexandria* embraced many of the *Traditions*, which were received by the Nation in general; and there might be some of that Craft and Caution in the *Version*, which he suspects in the present *Septuagint*. ‡

II. It is urged, in Favour of this Version, that *Josephus*, and all the *Christian Church*, for the first and purest Ages, followed the Computations made use of herein. §

I. As to the celebrated *Jewish Historian*, *Josephus's* following the *Septuagint* Calculations, I cannot see that this need to be denied, or can be much wondered

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\* *Lightf. Works*, Vol. II. p. 804, 805. † *Prid. Connect.* Vol. II. p. 44, 45. ‡ *Lightfoot*. Vol. II. p. 810. § *Is. Voss. de 70 Interp. passim*.



wondered at. He wrote for the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and chiefly designed to recommend his *Country* to the Esteem of those Nations, who had but an imperfect Knowledge of their Affairs. It is, therefore, reasonable to think that he would *favour* every Account, that, he apprehended, would be most for their *Honour*. The magnifying their Antiquities was a favourite Point, which he laboured, as plainly appears from the Beginning of his first Book against *Appion*, who had endeavoured to *degrade* the *Jews*, in regard to their *Antiquity*, because there was so little Notice taken of them among the *Greek Writers*.—Now, as there was in the Hands of the *learned Greeks*, the *Version* of their Law, in the *Greek Tongue*, laid up in a public Library at *Alexandria*, in which *Version* was contained this *enlarged* Account of the *Jewish Antiquities*, it cannot well be thought, that *Josephus* would contribute to *abate* their Claim to this high Antiquity, by giving a *diminishing* Computation. When they were *raised* so high, by the Numbers in the *Greek Version*, he would hardly *sink* them again, by contradicting those Computations, contrary to his own express Design ; by shewing any Disagreement in this respect, in their own Records, or sacred Books.

2. *Josephus* wrote his Antiquities, when the State was *destroyed*, and the Nation scattered ; for he published them in *Domitian's* Reign ; and he probably apprehended, that the *Jewish* Nation and Polity was never to *rise* more. He would, therefore, naturally incline to have his Nation *set* in Glory ; and leave it with all that Fame of Antiquity, which it had been so many Years in Possession of ; by means of the *Septuagint Chronology* ; which must have been well known to the *Greeks*.

3. It seems therefore to me, that there have been more Debates than are necessary, as to the Numbers in Chronological Calculations being corrupted in *Josephus*. I doubt not but the Corruptions in the Copies of our Author, were generally by Accident, and the Carelessness of Transcribers, rather than by Design. He seems plainly enough to have had the *Greek Version* generally before him, which Dr. *Twells* takes so much Pains to prove ; and (I think) he generally *followed* it in all those ancient Ages, where the *Difference* from the *Hebrew* answers this Design of *magnifying* the Antiquities of his Nation. \* Dr. *Twells* (I think) justly observes, that it is hard to say, who should take Pains to alter the Numbers in *Josephus*, to bring them into an Agreement with the *Septuagint* ; not the *Jews* of the latter Times *after* Christ, because they generally differed from the *Hebrew*. Not the *Christians*, who received the *Greek* or *Septuagint Version*, as a true Translation of *Moses* ; and so, of divine Authority. They never set such a Value on *Josephus*, as to be much concerned whether he agreed in his Computations with their Scriptures, or not. They thought the Authority of the *Version* sufficient.

4. It

\* *Chronol. Sept.* p. 197.



4. It is not evident, that he was so exactly skilful in the *Hebrew*, as he was in the *Greek*; and so he might more familiarly make use of the *Greek Version*. *Hornius*, and others, suspect this, from Senses and Interpretations which he puts on *Hebrew Names*, not agreeable to the present *Hebrew Spelling*, or radical Letters of the Words, from which he derives them. And further, *Josephus* is in some Things a *sceptical Writer*, and relates several Miracles, as dubious, whether they were Miracles, or only extraordinary, natural Events. He is not an Author of such glorious Simplicity as *Moses*. He was plainly a *Flatterer* of the *Romans*; and, at the same time, a *Flatterer* of his Country too.

III. As to the Primitive *Christians* generally receiving the *Greek Version*, it is plain they must have been under *Necessity* of making use of it, had it been really more faulty than it is. (1.) At the Beginning of Christianity, there were none but the *Jews*, who understood *Hebrew*; so that they could not have cited any Texts from the *Hebrew Bibles* for the Use of the Converts. And there were few in the *Western World*, besides some *Jews*, who understood *Syriac* so perfectly, as to induce them ordinarily to make use of Citations from the *Eastern Jewish Translations*; so that, if they cited at all, it must be from the *Greek*, which was the most general Language in most of the Provinces, after the *Macedonian Empire* was erected. Thus, in our Kingdom, *Q. Elizabeth's Bible* was in common Use, till a better Translation was provided; for no other could be had for the common People. And, as to the Use of the *Greek Version* in the Citations of the *New Testament* itself; there are many Instances, in which the Texts referred to, are quoted, not according to the present *Greek Version*, but the present *Hebrew*. And, in all, or most of these, there would be either an Obscurity, or less Propriety in quoting the Texts according to the *Greek*, as they are applied by the sacred Writers of the *New Testament*. Thus *Matt. ii. 15.* ἐξ αἰγυπτῆς ἐκάλεσα τὸν υἱόν μου, *out of Egypt have I called my Son*;—Is in the *Greek Version*, *Hos. xi. 1.* ἐξ αἰγυπτῆς μετέκαλεσα τὰ τέκνα αὐτοῦ. “*Out of Egypt have I called his Sons*,” viz. the Sons of *Israel*. Now this would not be so clear in applying it to *Christ*, according to the *Greek*; tho’ very easy, according to the *Hebrew*; for the Prophecy would well accommodate to a single Person, *my Son*, as prophetically referring to *Christ*.—Again; *Matth. iv. 16.* φῶς ἐνέειπεν αὐτοῖς, *Light is sprung up to them*. But in the *72 Version*, *Isa. ix. 2.* φῶς λαμπρεύσεται ὑμᾶς, *Light shall shine upon you*.—Again; *Matth. viii. 17.* αὐτὸς τὰς ἀδυναμίας ἡμῶν ἔλαβε, καὶ τὰς νοσοὺς ἔβασασεν, *He bore our Sicknesses*. But, in the *Greek*, *Isa. liii. 4.* οὐτὸς τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν φέρει, καὶ περὶ ἡμῶν ὁδυναῖται, *pro nobis dolet*. Now this would not be so pertinent to the Occasion, on which our Lord cites this Text, according to the *Greek*, as it is in the *Hebrew*. For *Christ* did not then grieve for us, but in a noble Sense He bore off [or took away] our Diseases and Infirmities.—Again; *Matth. xii. 18.* Ἴδου ὁ παῖς μου ὃν ἡρέτισα, *Behold my Son, whom I have chosen*, &c. But in the *Greek Version* it is, *Isa. xlii. 1.* Ἰακώβ ὁ παῖς μου ἀντὶ ἀληθείας αὐτοῦ Ἰσραὴλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου. Now these Words [*Jacob and Israel*] in the *Greek Version*,



sion, seem to turn the Eye from attending to the *Pertinency* of the Prophecy, as relating to *Christ*; but, as he cites it agreeable to the *Hebrew*, there is great *Propriety* in it, in representing the *mild* and *gentle* Method of *Christ's* Ministrations.—Again; *Rom. xi. 4.* the Oracle says to *Elias*, καταλιπον ἐμαυτον, “I have reserved to myself 7000, who have not bowed the Knee to the Image of *Baal*.” But the *Greek Version*, 3 *Kings xix. 18.* has it, καταλειψεις, Thou shalt leave 7000. Who shall leave? the Prophet was not the Destroyer: So that the Sense is not so clear in the *Septuagint* as in the *Hebrew*.—Further; the Apostle, 1 *Cor. xv. 54.* quotes thus, καταποθι ὁ θανατος εἰς νικησιν, Death is swallowed up to Victory, or in Victory. But the *Greek Version*, *Isa. xxv. 8.* has it thus; καταπιεν ὁ θανατος ἰσχυσας, devoravit Mors prævalens. Now this comes not up to the Dignity of the Prophecy, as the Apostle applies it; for he represents *Death* as conquered for ever, as in the *Hebrew*; but the *Greek Version* represents it as potent and conquering.—These are some plain Instances, among several others, which shew us, that the Holy Writers themselves often departed from the *Greek Version*, and corrected it, for a clearer Sense and *Pertinency*, according to the *Hebrew*.

2. Tho' it be allowed, that there were some Errors in the *Greek Version*, this is no more than what may be said of *all Versions*. The Apostles never taught that this Version was preferable to the Original *Hebrew*; and the primitive Christians did but few of them know any thing of the Original, and so could make no Comparisons. But then, there was an *Original Hebrew* in being, which could be consulted in due Time, when the *Hebrew Tongue* was come to the Knowledge of others, besides *Jews*. And then they might rectify those Errors in Calculations, which they had before been constrained to acquiesce in. They were to make use of their Reason and all their Skill in *Critique*, to find out the Truth, in the divine Books; as well as to explain and discover the Sense of any difficult Parts thereof; which might have been differently understood. Thus *Origen* and *Jerome* proceeded; and, upon maturely weighing the Point, rejected the *Septuagint* Computations, after they had been in high Veneration among *Christians* so long.

There could be no Necessity for a Miracle to help the Translators, by the Spirit of Prophecy, as *Philo* intimates them to have had, to translate into precisely the same Words; nor to prevent the Translators from venturing on the Fraud of altering the *Hebrew* Numbers, in their Chronology. For, as there was an *Hebrew* Copy, the Truth might be investigated by human Diligence, in due Season, on a careful comparing the one with the other, and considering, with critical Skill, every thing necessary to aid them in forming a Judgment of the Matter.—Finally, there doth not appear any Error in these Calculations, that directly affected the *Christian Cause*; and therefore they might be very well left to the Labour and Industry of good Men to rectify them afterwards.



IV. To come now to the main Stress of the Point. It is confessed, on all Hands, that there has been a *notorious* and very ancient Difference betwixt the *Hebrew* and the *Greek Computations*, as to the Times from the *Creation* to the *Flood*; and from the *Flood* to the Birth of *Abram*. And the great Question is, *How it came about?*—Our very learned Archbishop *Usher* \* thinks, that the *present Greek Version* could not be the *same*, which was by the 72 Elders translated for *Ptolemy*, for several Reasons. *First*, he concludes, from the Testimony of *Josephus*, and several other Ancients, that there was only a Version of the *Pentateuch* performed by the 72. And, from the Number of Days, in which it was performed, which were 72, according to *Aristeus*, that there could not be any *more* than the Books of the *Law*, translated in the Time of 72 Days.—Again; (2.) There are so many Marks of Inaccuracy and Corruption, so many Additions in some Parts, and Subtractions in others, from the *Hebrew Verity*, that he cannot allow, that our *present Greek Version* was the *Work* of the 72 Elders; of the Exactness of which there are such Encomiums in *Aristeus*; and of the Harmony and Agreement of which, both with themselves and with the *Hebrew*, such great Things are related by *Philo*; as to ascribe it to the *Spirit of Prophecy*. (3.) But yet he concludes, from the Chronology of *Demetrius*, mentioned by *Eusebius* (*Præp. Evang. Lib. 9. cap. 21.*) agreeing so much with our present *Septuagint*, that there were *corrupt* Translations grown *common* among the *Jews*, even while the *Ptolemaic Library* stood. For *Eusebius* cites this long Account of *Jacob*, given by *Demetrius*, from *Alexander Polyhistor*, who lived about the Age of *Sylla*, some Time before *Julius Cæsar*, who destroyed the ancient Library. (4.) *The venerable Primate* concludes, from all this, that there was a *complete Version* of the *Hebrew Scriptures*, *different* from the *Septuagint Version*, not only of the *Law*, but the *other sacred Books*, made by some *Hellenists* of *Alexandria*, for common Use. And this, he apprehends to have been executed, about the Time when *Onias* obtained Leave to build a Temple at *Heliopolis*, resembling that of *Jerusalem*, for the Use of the *Jews* transplanted into *Egypt*.† And, that they had their *Law*, and other sacred Books *read* among them in the *Greek Translation*, or *expounded* therein.—So that the Opinion of this great Author is, that tho' the real genuine *Septuagint* was *not* corrupted, yet *that*, which was become a *common Version* in *Demetrius's* Time, even while the *Alexandrian Library* of *Ptolemy* was standing, was *corrupted* in this very Point, of the *Chronology* of the first Ages.

II. As I cannot discern sufficient Reason for having such an high Opinion of the supposed Version of the *Septuagint*; or that there ever was in *Egypt* any other but a common *Greek Version*, I think that this Corruption in the Computations, was made AT FIRST, by the *Greek Translators*, who first published:

\* *Usher's Syntagma de 70 Interpret. cap. 2. 3.* † *Joseph. Antiq. Lib. 13. cap. 6.*



published the *Pentateuch* in Greek. *Usher* owns, that this Corruption was got into the Versions in vulgar Use, from the Instance of *Demetrius*, even before the first Copy was burnt with the *Ptolemaic* Library. But it must sure have been very bold and unskilful in the *Jews*, to alter their Chronology, in the Versions for common Use, after they had deposited in a public Library a true Version of their genuine Calculations of Time, to which all the Learned could have such easy Access, and from which they could so easily have confuted their Pretensions to that augmented Antiquity.—I therefore believe with *Fabricius*,\* and many other Critics, that there was but One Original Greek Version of the *Pentateuch*.—III. It appears to me, that these Additions to the Numbers, in this first Greek Translation, were made out of Vanity, and an Ostentation of Antiquity; and that this is the true Secret of the Difference betwixt the genuine *Hebrew* Reckoning, and this falsified Greek one.—This Version was made in a very inventive Age. All Nations had begun, or were beginning to magnify their Antiquities, and to publish them in the Greek Language. *Herodotus* had given very amplifying Accounts of the *Egyptian* Antiquity, some Years before. And it is plain, that this Scheme had been carried to a great Length, before his Time; because the *Egyptian* Priests had these Stories so ready to relate to this inquisitive Stranger, when he came among them.—*Ctesias*, after the manner of *Herodotus*, had greatly exaggerated the *Assyrian* Antiquities. And these might be well known to those skilled in Greek Literature. For he (probably) came back from *Persia*, and published in Greece, what he pretended to have collected from the *Eastern* Records.—*Berosus* engaged in a like Work in *Babylon*, and *Manetho* in *Egypt*; and (probably) they were a great while about them, before they published them. And these two famous Antiquarians, each of them, dedicated their Performances to their Kings, which shews, that magnifying the Nation's Antiquities, pleased their Princes, about that Age of the World.

IV. Those Examples, which other Nations had set, might inspire the learned *Jews* of *Alexandria*, to make bold with their sacred Records, and to raise their Antiquities, for the Honour of their Nation, in like manner.—They knew, that the World was but about such an Age, from the Flood; (for all the World had been destroyed, except *Noah's* Family, according to their own Historian, *Moses*). And therefore, that the boasted Antiquity of their Neighbours, was certainly Forgery and Invention; and that they themselves were not doing any worse Thing, than the Nations had done before them, in the same View and Design.

V. In those Ages of great Action, Tumult, and Agitation, there might not be a great Number of the *Jews* in the Secret. Few of the common People understood *Hebrew*, and so were Strangers to this Alteration. And,

as

\* *Bibliothec. Græc.* Vol. II. cap. 12.



as to the few that were *learned*, they might conspire to favour this pious Fraud, and easily forgive the Design, out of national Vanity, as they knew they acted no worse than their Rivals for Antiquity had done.

VI. They might more boldly venture on this Piece of Corruption, in their *Chronology*; because they were almost sure not to be *detected* by any but *Jews*, since no other Nation understood *Hebrew*. There were few, even of their own Nation, that *could* detect it; and those that *could*, *would not* be like to do so. And, when the *Greek* Translation had been a while read among the *Hellenist Jews*, they would insensibly become familiar with it, and the *Vulgar* would take all that they found there, to be *Scripture*, or *Moses's Law* in *Greek*. Hereby the *Chronology*, as well as the other Particulars of the *Law*, would soon be generally received.

II. But perhaps those, who adhere to *Vossius's* Scheme, will alledge, that this is making *History*, instead of finding it; and that there is *no ancient* Historian, who gives any distinct Account of this *deliberate Corruption* of the Numbers in the *Greek* Version, or of this *Design* to magnify their *Antiquities*. And this is true.—But then; those, who will *not* allow this Supposition, yet *do allow* that there is this very ancient *Difference* betwixt the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Computations, so ancient and so universal, that I have never heard of any ancient Copies in which they agree. And, therefore, they must make a Supposition altogether as precarious, \* *viz.* that the *Jews*, sometime or other, corrupted and *designedly altered* the *Hebrew* Bible, in all these Numbers, in which they *differ* from the *Greek*; that the *one* or the *other* has been altered with *Design*, is *certain*; and there is *no ancient* History, which gives any Account of this *Alteration*, any more than the *other*; so that their Account is as precarious as ours.—The Advocates for the Genuineness of the *Greek* Numbers usually fix the *Time* for making this Corruption in the *Hebrew* Text, as to their *Chronology*, sometime *after Christianity* had prevailed in the World.† But, if the *Jews* would have *corrupted* their sacred Books, and have pretended as a Reason for *altering* them, that the *Greek* Version was *falsified* and corrupted; one would think that they should have chosen to *alter* their Original Text in those *Prophecies*, which the Christians made use of *against* them; and not in those, which they never alledged for this Purpose. The Christians *never* argued against the *Jews*, from the Genealogies of these ancient Times, as they were laid down in the *Greek* Version, to prove that *Christ* came at a Time which would *answer* those Calculations; for they did not alledge any Prophecies, which took their Date *so high*, as to reckon any Number of Years from any Part of that Period, to the Time of his Coming.

2. What Foundation they had for the *Jewish* Tradition, that the *Messiah* was to come in the *sixth* Millenary of the World, I know not, unless it be the

\* *Twells's* Pref. to *Vindication* of 70. † *Is. Voss. de Interpret.* 72. *passim.* *Twells's Chronol.* 70. p. 117. *Pezron. Antiq. des Tems.*



the pretended Prophecy of *Elias*. But the learned *Father Pezron*,\* quotes it from their *Talmuds*, as a prevailing Opinion, which they received from Tradition, that the Time of the *Law*, should be two thousand Years, and that the *Messiah* should not come till the sixth Age, or *Millenary* of the World. And thence he and others imagine that the *Jews*, after the setting up of *Christianity*, began to corrupt the *Hebrew* Text, for bye Ends;† particularly, lest it should appear that it agreed with the Time of *Christ's* Coming in the Flesh. But, as there is no Text which lays a Foundation for this Tradition, that I know of; so there are so many Things in which their Traditions differ from their sacred Books, that they must have altered much more than this Chronology, in order to reconcile them;—for the pretended Prophecy of *Elias* was not all they had to encounter.

3. After *Christianity* came to spread, there were more Parties concerned in the Purity of the *Hebrew* Scriptures than before; and therefore they must soon have detected a Fraud of this kind. *Christian Critics* begun to study the *Hebrew* Tongue, for the sake of this holy Book; on which they built much, as well as the *Jews*. *Origen*, about the End of the Second Century, made himself Master of *Hebrew*; and, as he was bred and resided at *Alexandria*, he might have Access to every Curiosity, that was left in that celebrated *Musæum*; and particularly to the *Hebrew* Copy of the Bible, that was sent from *Herod* to *Cleopatra*, and supposed to be placed in the *Serapeum*, before the Beginning of *Christianity*. So that it appears to me, on the whole, that there is much greater Probability of corrupting the *Greek* Version, in the Time of *Ptolemy*, by the first Translators; because there was visibly an End to be answered by it, viz. that of magnifying their Antiquities according to the Humour of that Age; and, when there was scarce any Danger of Detection;—there was greater Probability (I say) of corrupting the *Greek* Version, than there is that the *Hebrew* Text should be altered, at a Time when there was no End to be answered by it, against either *Christians* or *Pagans*; and, when it would be almost impossible to escape the Detection of the *Christian Critics*, who were now as much concerned as the *Jews* themselves, to study the *Hebrew*.

\* *Pezron. Antiq. des Tems.* † *Vid. Yardley. Geneal. p. 159.*

*The End of the FIRST VOLUME.*